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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

AN OCCUPATIONAL ANALYSIS OF SPORTSWRITERS IN TORONTO, CANADA

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

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FALL, 1980

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled AN OCCUPATIONAL ANALYSIS OF SPORTSWRITERS IN TORONTO, CANADA submitted by Terry A. Valeriote, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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DATE: Oct 10 1980

ABSTRACT

This study consisted of an occupational analysis of sportswriters in Toronto, Canada. Observation along with formal interviews were utilized to collect the data. On-the-scene observation occurred at the sportswriters' offices and at a sporting venue, and interviews were conducted with 35 of the sportswriters.

General areas examined in the study were:

a) A general description of the sportswriter;
b) The sportswriters' perceptions of media impact;
c) The role and function of the sportswriter;
d) The writers' personal views of sport;
e) The ethical standards of sportswriting in Toronto;
f) The content of the sports pages.

On the basis of the data provided, the following conclusions were reached. The average sportswriter in Toronto has a post secondary school education; makes over $20,000 per year; believes that the media influence the public; maintains that his function is to inform, entertain and reflect; has an undeveloped philosophy of sport; follows only a personal code of ethics; has an average writing ability; is looking for leadership from his superiors and, believes that the content of the sports pages has not changed significantly over the years.

Also, the field of sportswriting cannot be classified as a profession. There is no widely accepted training required to become a sportswriter, no formal service ideal, no code of ethics and no professional organization (other than in name only) that promotes the autonomy of both the organization and its individual members.

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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Sportswriters are employed by the newspaper industry which is a business enterprise dominated by the profit motive. The sportswriting business purports to be recognized as a profession, but whether it really is, depends on how well it meets recognized standards. Sociologists generally agree that for an occupation to be considered a profession, it should adhere to the following standards:

1. The role requires a special body of knowledge and theory which can only be acquired through a special form of training.
2. There are professional training schools that reflect the knowledge base of the profession with high standards of admission.
3. There is a dedication to the service ideal by members of the profession.
4. There is a professional organization that promotes the autonomy of both the organization and individual members.
5. There is an established code of ethics which ensures that the professional behaviour is directed toward the primary objective of the clients' welfare. (Greenwood, 1957; Pavalko, 1971 Larson, 1977)

The degree to which sportswriting as a component of the journalism social system meets these standards affects the respect and prestige it receives from other professions and other areas of journalism.

Sportswriters have traditionally been perceived as sport buffs and their occupation a sinecure for former athletes rather than true newspapermen (Shecter, 1970). Sportswriters are often derogated by other journalists who claim sportswriters work in the toy department of the newspaper profession (Craig, 1971). They are seen as idol worshippers who have become involved in sportswriting because they are able to enter sporting events free and can mingle with star athletes (Andelman, 1974).

Their credibility has been attacked for various reasons. They have no special training for their jobs (Smith, 1976). On occasion, some writers have sacrificed their objectivity by accepting gifts, free meals and liquor from the sport establishment (McFarlane, 1955). Furthermore, as a group, they have been chided for the notable absence of social commentary in their writing (Edwards, 1969).

It is one thing to be part of a profession, it is another for a member of that profession to be a 'professional'. The term 'professional' has various degrees of meanings. Webster's Dictionary defines it as either simply being "one who engages in a particular pursuit for financial gain or livelihood" or more profoundly "one with sufficient authority or practical experience in an area of knowledge or endeavour". However, like all reputable journalists, the sportswriter as a professional is expected to perform the following four functions: (1) inform, (2) interpret, (3) guide or educate and (4) entertain (Bond, 1971:5). In addition, while fulfilling these functions, he must act in accord with occupational norms such as: honesty, accuracy, fairness, personal and professional integrity while being independent from the client group (Greenwood, 1957).

Some latitude is allowed in any profession. Despite a code of ethics or an agreed upon set of norms and values, there may be room for individual interpretations of situations. In fact, it is the way the professional perceives the organization that determines his action, not the organization itself. Social roles, norms, goals and the reward and punishment system in the organization may set conditions and consequences of action but they do not determine action. Therefore, even if a code of ethics exists, the human element will not guarantee that sportswriters conform to the norms that have been established.

The Problem

Despite the high readership and the potential influence of the sports section, little is known about the men and women who write these pages. Utilizing observation technique and in-depth interviews, the purpose of this study was to do an occupational analysis of the sportswriter. As part of this analysis, the author studied how sportswriters were trained and educated, how they performed their roles and the problems they encountered. In addition, the analysis indicated how the sportswriter's role impacted on other relevant interlocking roles such as (a) his employer, (b) his competitors, (c) players and owners, (d) newspaper readers. Finally, the study analyzed whether or not sportswriting could formally be classified as a profession.

Justification of the Study

1. There has been little scholarly examination of professional sportswriters in North America. What little information that does exist has focused on the American scene. It is important to know more about

sportswriters generally but particularly those in Canada.

2. Since the sportswriters write daily for a large audience that is interested in the subject-matter and participants of sport, they have the potential to exert an influence. This study will reflect how responsibly they approach their role of informing the public.

3. This study should assist aspiring sportswriters to acquire a better understanding of the field and hopefully will assist current sportswriters in the performance of their occupation.

Limitations of the Study

1. Although the sports journalism social system in Toronto appears similar to those in other large North American cities, it may not be the same as in other centres.

2. Section D of the questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions. Interpretations and categorization of the responses were done by the author to present dominant responses and the statistics presented should be interpreted not in terms of priority, but dominant responses.

3. The author was not able to assume the role of a sports reporter, only to observe the role, due to situational factors.

4. The author was able to spend four months observing and interviewing the sportswriters. More time would have helped to provide a more penetrating analysis.

Delimitations of the Study

The study was restricted to an analysis of the professional sportswriter of the three daily newspapers in Toronto, namely the

Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star and the Toronto Sun. These papers employed a total of thirty-nine sportswriters which provided a satisfactory sample for the study. This city is also unique in that it is only the second city in North America that has three daily newspapers and one of the few cities in North America that is a home base for professional baseball, hockey, football and soccer.

Definition of Terms

Beat Reporter:	A writer who is assigned by the sports editor to cover a specific sport or a specific team.
Columnist:	A writer whose prime responsibility is to offer opinion on given events or personalities.
Editor:	One who directs the publication of a daily newspaper.
Mass Media:	The use of technological means to communicate a message to a mass of people at a given point in time (Casty, 1968).
Participant Observation:	A qualitative social science methodology by which the researcher interacts with the subjects in the subjects' environment during which data is systematically collected (McCall and Simmons, 1969).
Reporter:	A writer whose prime responsibility is to report the facts of a given event.
Running Copy:	Copy prepared by the writer while the game is in progress. At the end of the game, an introduction and conclusion are added to complete the article.

Outline of the Study

This chapter has outlined the purposes and rationale for this study. Chapter II will consist of a review of the literature pertinent

to the field of sportswriting. The following topics will be treated in this chapter: a brief history of the sports page; an overview of the typical sports page content; an appraisal of the impact of the sports page; the role of the sportswriter; and the factors that affect his professionalism. The methods and procedures used in this study to gather data will be described in Chapter III. Chapter IV will consist of a presentation of the results. There will also be a discussion of these results, particularly as they relate to the literature on sportswriting. Finally, Chapter V will provide a summary of the study's highlights along with some specific conclusions. In addition, certain implications of the study will be explained with the view to making recommendations which may assist sportswriters in performing their jobs.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

History of the Sports Page

During pre-Confederation days in Canada, the local sporting and recreational activities of the early Canadian settlers were recorded in both English and French newspapers of the times (Wise and Fisher, 1974:301). For example, in 1789 the La Gazette du Québec carried horse racing results (Wise and Fisher, 1974:301), as well as other activities such as curling, cricket, sailing, rowing and rifle shooting.

Toward the mid to late nineteenth century, with the advent of advanced printing and communication methods, sporting and recreational activities were presented in specialized journals. The Spirit of the Times, published in 1831, was one of the earliest North American sporting journals featuring horse racing and encouraging activity in cricket and baseball (Cozens and Stumpf, 1953:113). Other journals developed focusing on sports such as boxing, baseball, hunting, fishing, football and bicycling (Betts, 1953). In Canada, periodicals such as The Canadian Cricket Field and The Athletic Life were published.

The public appeal of these sporting journals prompted other general magazines to carry sport articles and, in order to increase circulation, newspapers also began to publish the results of local sporting events. Dr. William George Beers began writing about Lacrosse for the Montreal Gazette in 1860 and is recognized by some historians as Canada's first sportswriter (Vellathottam and Jones, 1974:36). With

the advent of the telegraph in 1870, newspapers were able to publish the results of sporting events from across the country and abroad (Jones, 1970:5). By 1880, many Canadian papers were publishing sports news on a regular basis. The Globe in Toronto had the first well-organized sports page in 1883 (Wise and Fisher, 1974:305). The Globe also introduced sports photography in the 1890's (Jones, 1970:6).

By the turn of the century, most Canadian papers were covering sports on a daily basis. The language used in the sportswriting was very flowery and descriptive. In the twenties and thirties (The Golden Age of Sports), the format of the sports pages became standardized. Local, national and international events were given coverage with heavy emphasis on American sports (Wise and Fisher, 1974:301). Since that time, the format of the sports pages has not changed significantly.

With the many sport heroes of the time (for example, Babe Ruth, Bill Tilden, Jack Dempsey were in their prime), the public interest in sport increased and the sports pages prospered. In Canada, during this time period, many Canadian newspapers hired women to write full-time sports. This coincided with the "Golden Age" of women sports:

> In 1928, The Telegram (Toronto) made reporter Phyllis Griffiths its first woman sports columnist to offset the work of Alexandrine Gibb who wrote for the crosstown rival, The Star. The Montreal Star soon followed suit hiring 1928 Olympic competitor Myrtle Cook for the same purpose. Bobby Rosenfeld, also a member of the successful 1928 Olympic squad, signed on with The Globe (Toronto) in 1933 and during the same decade Patricia Page was assigned to cover women's sport, particularly the exploits of the famed Edmonton Grads, for the Edmonton Journal (Macdonald, 1978:8).

With the advent of the electronic media, sportswriters were

forced to give more coverage to behind-the-scene stories and more analytical coverage of the events themselves. Over the years, more space has been given to the sports pages and larger staffs have been hired. Today, in the newspapers, even magazine type sports sections are included. Despite the heavy competition from the electronic media, the sports pages have survived and even flourished to the point where they are the third most read section in today's papers (Lusty, 1976).

The Content of the Sports Pages

One of the harsh realities of the sportswriting business is the constant pressure to meet deadlines. To save time, while covering a game, many sportswriters try to write the main content of the story while the game is in progress (i.e. running copy). Once the event is over, interviews are held with the players and coaches to obtain quotes that might enrich the article. A heading is then placed on the story, which supposedly summarizes the action, and the story is sent in to be edited and printed. There is not much time for reflection so the quality of the product will depend upon the abilities and experience of the writer (Lapin, 1977).

The sportswriter's duties are assigned by the editor of the sports department. If the sportswriter is assigned to cover a 'beat', daily stories are required on the team being covered. At times, this can be a difficult task as often sportswriters have to scratch to find a worthwhile article. However, the sports editor make the final choice and they decide what finally goes into the paper, photos and overall layout included. Therefore, if there are some faults in the

sports pages, "a large share of it resides with the editor" (Andelman, 1974:40).

It appears that there are no sophisticated measurements used by editors or sportswriters to determine which events should be covered. MacDougall (1941) postulates that the deciding factor for coverage should be based upon attendance. Smith indicates that, "... personal contacts, phone calls and letters" (1975:13) are relied upon and that, "... the end result is that the sports journalists rely on their experience and instincts in trying to predict what the public wants" (1975:14).

Nowadays, amateur sport is fighting to acquire more coverage and editors are becoming more sympathetic, mainly because the quality and organization of amateur sport is increasing. However, in the past, it was this lack of organization and lack of sophistication by amateur sport that resulted in poor coverage.

In support of this view is an unpublished report by Moscovitz (1973) which revealed that many of the national sport organizations in Ottawa were uncooperative with the media, did not inform them of events, and were unskilled in their press relations.

Goodwin, a CBC television sport executive, stated, "... we had to rid ourselves of the thought that amateur sport was 'owed coverage'" (1971:73). He compared the relationship of the media with amateur sport as a love affair when compared with the media/pro sport relationship which was based on a "mutual respect of rowdy equals able to reward or wreak havoc on each other at will" (1971:73). He suggested that amateur sport be more organized, establish realistic media goals and procedures to evaluate these goals.

Levitt (1971), a Canadian Press correspondent and Raymond (1971), a radio executive, reinforced this lack of co-operation and organization between the media and amateur sport. Raymond stated that amateur sport often forgot about the radio as a medium to get publicity. Now, it is a CBC radio sport policy that 60 percent of their coverage must be dedicated toward amateur sport but the network often has great difficulty in trying to find enough content.

The topics that seem to receive the most coverage in the sports pages are professional sports and sports where betting and money are involved. A major content analysis of the sports pages of thirty major Canadian newspapers done by Scanlon (1970) between May-August, 1969, gives some indication of where priorities were:

- 67.1 percent of the content centered on the five major sports: baseball, horse racing, golf, football and hockey.
- 86.9 percent of the content centered on the male population and only 5.5 percent on females.
- two-thirds of the information reported was devoted to professional sport.

Smith (1975) in an analysis of the sports pages in Edmonton also found that American sports events were given a great amount of coverage as well as professional team events and horse racing entries and results.

The Language of the Sports Pages

One of the most important qualities that a sportswriter requires in informing the public is a good writing style. Any newspaper department, whether it be straight news, or sports, is always looking for good writers who can write colourfully and who can bring

situations alive. One of the major criticism of sports pages has been directed toward the cliché infested, low quality writing. To be fair, there is both excellent and poor writing in the sports pages. The literature on this topic by Americans generally downgrades sportswriters while the Europeans tend to praise them.

Book reviewer Garnett of the late New York Herald Tribune, commenting in Red Smith's book, The Press Box, states:

> ... most sportswriters suffer from hyperthyroid congestion of objectives and are dope-fiends for forced similes. They try to do jitterbugs with words and have no change of pace (1976:8).

MacDougall states in his analysis of sports coverage, "... that it is the most horrendous set of gibberish ever set before the eyes of the reader" (1972:471), while Shecter adds that it is "consistently bland and hero-worshipful" presented in a "cliché-ridden writing style" (1970:21). He maintains that sportswriting need be no different than other writing and could, in fact, be better.

A study conducted by Tannenbaum and Noah (1969) entitled: "Sportugese: A Study of Sports Page Communication" indirectly brings out this 'gibberish and cliché-ridden writing style'. It shows how sports fans have been conditioned to understand the meaning of certain verbs. For example, some verbs such as "whumped" and "whipped" are often used to indicate a win by a large point spread while others such as "galloped" or "clawed" are used to denote a win by home teams that possess names such as "Roughriders" or "Tigers" respectively. The study also indicated a high percentage of slang verbs are often used in sportswriting that are not to be found in any dictionary.

McCartney (1938:38-54) lists a wide selection of alliterative names across sport for teams and sports personalities that have added

colour to the sports page (e.g. Joe Louis -- The Bronx Bomber, "Dizzy" Dean, "Slammin" Sam Snead).

Because the sportswriter has a deadline to meet, sometimes clarity and a polished literary product are difficult to produce. However, Ghose tries to place this dilemma in perspective:

> Obviously a sports report is necessarily a condensed and a very generalized account of what took place but that does not mean that the quality of writing should be downright wretched. It is possible to convey one's meaning with a variety of statements. Therefore, these reporters who express their meaning with the most ready-made phrases are guilty of neglecting their own craft; they abuse the very values which they ought to sustain (1974:65).

Sportswriting and drama are often mixed together. Gelfand feels the writer witnesses drama in every game he covers and that the writer's greatest task is to "make the reader feel this drama" (1969:4). Riess, a European writer is in agreement when he says that:

> ... sportswriting in its highest form is nothing other than the stylized representation of man comparable in a way to the work of a Greek sculptor of times long ago. It portrays man as he really is only bigger than life size. He stands naked. For when is a man more naked than when he gives his all, when he summons himself for the last and greatest effort (1958:76).

Corum, for many years one of America's top sports columnists, had similar feelings as noted in Gelfand's book, Modern Sportswriting:

> ... the struggle that we all have to face - life - takes place in a single sports contest. ... The sportswriter is in a position to catch this feeling and its colour and to show it as it is (1969:4).

McGonagle puts it more simply, "... the writing should be colourful and dramatic and perhaps, humourous too" (1975:95).

Merchant claimed that writers of the past considered themselves as "drama critics and bards" (1976:vii) but really weren't good sports-

writers. But he wonders how things have changed with respect to language and style:

> Many of us, meanwhile, with our degrees in journalism and our electric typewriters, have merely traded one set of clichés for another, substituted pointless or insincere quotes for our own perceptions (1976:vii).

Some excellent writing has and is being seen in the sports pages. The emphasis is on clear, crisp writing sprinkled with a little humour. Educational background does not guarantee good writing and although excellent writers are few and far between, the only way to improve is by writing and writing and writing.

The Impact of the Sports Pages

The question often arises: Do the sports pages have any impact on the public? This is a point of considerable scholarly dispute. The following section will consist of an examination of the research conducted on the impact of the media generally, and the sports pages specifically.

The theories on media impact generally agree that the media have some potential to affect people's actions and attitudes, but that other variables and circumstances dictate the degree of this impact. One prevalent theory on the influence of the media can be termed the '1984' theory, which states that the media is used to manipulate society (Schramm, 1972:466). Another is the 'status quo' theory, which states that the nature of the mass media leads them to be conservative, to oppose change rather than bring it about and to stay close to the status quo even in matters of taste. It is perceived that the "truth lies somewhere between the 1984 and the status quo theories and probably a

bit closer to the latter" (Schramm, 1972:466) namely, that the media tend toward reinforcing rather than manipulating.

Lazarsfeld and Merton are proponents of the status quo theory. They maintain that the media perform three major social functions: "1) the conferring of status on public issues, persons, organizations and social movements, 2) the enforcing of social norms, 3) the lulling of people into inaction by bombarding them with ideas but not prompting them to action" (1972:497-502). They continue by saying that the influence the media have stems:

> ... not only from what is said but more significantly, from what is not said. ... Hence by leading toward conformism and by providing little basis for a critical appraisal, the commercial sponsored mass media indirectly but effectively restrain the cogent development of a genuinely critical outlook (1972:503).

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1964) also maintain that the media provide information but the manner in which this is accepted depends upon how opinion leaders or experts within a group interpret this information. This is classified as the "two-step flow of communication".

There is scholarly support also for the 1984 Theory. Lippman feels that the impression we have and the way we think are generated by the media. He concludes that "public opinions must be organized for the press if they are to be sound, not by the press as is the case today" (1972:486).

Stein further states that:

> ... the media transmit the full gamut of the cultural heritage and shower confirmations of correctness upon it. ... The drive to imitate the status, skill or intelligence of another may become so powerful as to carry with it parrotry of manners quite extraneous to any consciousness of the stimulus (1970:352-4).

Aldrich also agrees that the impact of the media is very strong. She explains:

> It changes our language, stimulates our emotions, informs our intellect, influences our ideas, values and attitudes. ... The majority of material is chosen or designed to produce a predetermined response (1975:5).

Other mass communication experts discount these theories and maintain that there are other variables that directly affect the manner or degree in which the media themselves will influence the individual. These variables, among others, consist of the mental and social conditioning a person had undergone as a result of family, school and church influences; group relationships; sex; age; and occupation levels.

> Thus both the relative adequacy of the audiences social realities and the relative degree of audience dependency on media information resources must be taken into account to explain and predict the effects of media messages (Defleur and Rokeach, 1975:278).

From a consumer's point of view, readers tend to read newspapers or magazines which they find cater to their own tastes. Thus, they decide what they want to be affected by. Edwards confirms this when he says:

> Public opinion studies have shown time and time again that people will not buy or read anything with which they disagree. We tend to read only what reinforces our own attitudes. Newspaper reporters, editors and publishers are keenly aware of this tendency. They have to be. For most newspapers operate to make money. Most do, however, try to strike a happy medium between service and profit. ... For no segment of the mass media, basically a capitalistic enterprise is going to risk financial disaster for the sake of principle (1969:33).

Also, rather than affecting issues that are deeply personal

to us (e.g. religious beliefs), the media, if anything, might affect peripheral issues such as what clothes to wear, what cars to buy and so forth (Berelson, 1969). This is generally so because we do not have established inbred opinions and attitudes on the peripheral issues to the same extent we do on deeply personal ones.

Violence has been defined as "the use of means or actions which are harmful to the physical, psychic or moral integrity of others" (Burnett, 1971:7). Media research has also centered on the reason for violence in the media. Three reasons seem to dominate. The first is a matter of simplicity. Violence is a time saver. It is not placed in the media to cater to the public taste but within a writer's limited time and space, it is functional. Violence also provides variety and possibly, some vicarious enjoyment for the reader (Geen, 1977). Whether violence through the media directly affects behaviour has not been scientifically affirmed but it appears again that other variables such as social class and educational background affect how an individual reader reacts to the violence.

If the media in general might affect the public in various ways, it would seem natural that the sport media might also have some impact. However, the impact, as previously stated, would depend a great deal on characteristics of the audience (e.g. education, economic status). There are various views as to what impact the sports pages have on the public ranging from very minor to quite extensive. Cozens and Stumpf state that the media act as a mirror to society and likewise the sport media. To them, "the media will continue to show the pride and the prejudice, the weaknesses and strengths, the fads and fancies ... " (1973:420). Fisher agrees with this point but does not accept

the fact the sport media will revolutionize sport:

> First let me give short shrift to the media as having much of a role in the future of sport. Its role has been and will be largely peripheral or only mildly influential on the course of Canadian sport; that is the elements of the media may be mirror or gossip or promoter or conduit of sporting matters; they are not catalystic or critical or interpretative or persuasive in any moralistic or ideal sense (1973:154).

Fisher also feels that what is now in place in sport will be there in the year 2000 as it was in the 1880's mainly because sports functionaries, including sports editors, are generally conservative in their thinking and they have an obsession with the present. Edwards concedes this point and does not expect change to occur very rapidly because sports editors "like the news media they serve tend to be of conservative bent in social and political matters" (1969:33).

Francis, similar to Fisher's argument, feels that the sports pages are concerned with the present and are written for "immediate response (i.e. Class 1 News)" (1967:714). Wolseley concurs as he states, "It is also reasonable to think that people treat sports purely as entertainment and except for the adolescent and female hero-worshippers, are not inclined to read in-depth about it" (1965:267).

Jack Dulmage, a Windsor (Ontario) sports editor, summarizes the prevailing thoughts on media effects when he states:

> Sport media might have an effect but other influences such as affluence, leisure time, the airplane, government will have more of an effect and that, if any of the media will change things, it will be television (1973:173).

He does maintain that television has had an impact on sportswriting itself since sportswriting has become more critical and penetrating (1973:175).

Smith (1974), in a study of sport media influence, discovered that only 6.7 percent of a sampling of 164 persons felt that the mass media influenced their opinions of sport while 59.1 percent felt that a person in their primary group influenced their attitudes, supporting Katz and Lazarsfeld's position (1964).

Others feel that the sport media have a strong influence. Berlin, for example, claims the content of the sports pages will continue to "influence the value we place on sport and athletics" (1973:170), particularly, as it pertains to women's involvement in sport. This implies that the less coverage given to women the less involvement in sport and conforms with the general principle postulated by Lazarsfeld that media influence is more significant "from what is not said" (1972:503). (1972:503). This opinion is also supported by Smith (1976). Berlin (1973) further suggests that the media need a more sophisticated evaluation process to know what the public wants.

Péladeau (1970), a Québec media entrepreneur, felt that the amount of coverage the sport media gave to a sport could directly affect attendance at the event. He stated that this was the case for Junior Hockey in Québec. Some authors feel that an athlete's career can be affected by what is written in the sports pages. Barnes contends that "the sportswriter can make a good ball player into a star player by concentrating so much ink on the guy that the fan predictably panders to that individual" (1971:64). Francis reinforces this view by stating, "... that, if they choose, sportswriters can virtually destroy a personality... by controlling what the fans learn of the personalities" (1967:718). Andelman also would agree when he charges that sportswriters did not reveal that Bobby Orr, the hockey player is "moody, profane,

arrogant and obtuse" (1974:51).

On the larger scale, Francis contends that single press towns can have a tremendous influence, that games can be badly reported and written, that information can be hidden and contrary points of view not reported or distorted, and that bad plays can be ignored or explained away. Closely associated with this thought, Comiskey, Beyat and Zillman (1977) state that the media do affect the fan not through the actions on the field but by the commentary presented. Events that in reality are not spectacular are often stated or written to be spectacular and this has a significant effect on the manner in which the fan or reader translates the action.

The Role and Relationships of the Sportswriter

It appears that sportswriters enter the field of journalism for three major reasons (Smith, 1975:6):

1. They have a strong interest and background in sports.
2. They appreciate the recognition that the job brings.
3. They inherit a degree of power by writing about a popular topic and about important people.

However, once in the job, sportswriters have a complex role to play in the newspaper profession. This role is aptly described by Francis:

> The sportswriter is not a simple social being. He is a bundle of relationships which he must enter and develop from time to time. He is a member of a workforce; he has a job to do. He meets people; he writes about some. He addresses his comments to some people. He likes some of those with whom he interacts; he dislikes some. He is a social creature, many faceted, with a highly complex system of motivations as a result (1967:725).

The role of the sportswriter is similar to that of any other writer in the paper. He has a responsibility to the public and should write based upon informed opinion. The more thoroughly that the writer has prepared himself, the more responsibly he can inform the public. Gelfand implies this when he states that writers should think about the values in the field of sport and have at least analyzed and taken a stand upon some of the following issues:

1. amateurism vs professionalism
2. exaggerated publicity for scholastic stars
3. invasion of an athlete's private life
4. emphasis on winning
5. emphasis on blood and gore
6. participation vs spectator sports
7. sportsmanship and fair play
8. the all-Canadian reporter
9. profanity
10. public service (1969:596).

There are some editors in the business who expect that the beat reporters report only the 'facts' and that if any opinion is required, a columnist will supply the follow-up. Their general dictum is, "Your job is to report the sporting news, not to initiate a crusade" (Edwards, 1969). However, the days are past when a reporter, particularly a sportswriter, cannot inject an opinion with a fact because to deny this to the reporter denies him the social responsibility to interpret the event according to the goals and values of society. This philosophy is supported by the famous Joseph Pulitzer (1904) and is succinctly described by Hohenberg when he says:

> Wherever the journalist practises his profession with skill, courage, honesty, and resolute independence, he is a primal force in any open society. The greater his freedom, the broader are his

> responsibilities. For by his very nature, he becomes deeply involved in social change, in the fundamentals of public service and the struggle for progress toward a better life (1978:12).

Therefore, Pulitzer and Hohenberg believe the writer has a social responsibility and the failure to meet this responsibility lowers the sportswriter to being an automaton. The internal relationship between the sportswriter and the sports establishment will be described later. However, the sportswriter also must interact with other groups such as other writers and the public.

Sportswriters face constant pressure to consistently produce quality articles. Daily they compete with writers from other papers covering the same beat. Neither the writer nor the editor likes to be "scooped" on a story (Edwards, 1973). Therefore, there is a standing requirement for the writer to be on top of what is happening.

The sportswriter has very little formal contact with the public since there are no forums available where the writer can personally exchange ideas with the public. Smith (1978) maintains that the public has expectations from the sportswriter ranging from being kept informed on what is occurring to being an expert on trivia questions. He further states that at times the public expects the sportswriter to "serve an ombudsman role by exposing injustices and raising controversial issues" (1978:56). The sportswriter though has no formal means available for analyzing public interest. Despite this unstructured approach, the writer must be responsive to what the public considers to be news especially in order to attract a large reading audience and to satisfy the profit motive of his business. There is the opinion that many fans do not appreciate seeing sports criticized. Dunning states

this is so because the "sports pages provide some comfortable stability in life amid the harassing interruptions and discontinuous transactions of daily experience (1971:52). Edwards offers basically the same reason that "if sport is impugned, the fan is deprived of a significant vehicle by which to sustain his own life's struggles" (1973:250). But Edwards further states that this consequently places the writer in a precarious position. "As a journalist, he is bound by professional ethics to strive for objectivity. As a sports reporter, his role demands that he portray the activities and individuals in sport as conforming to the ideal values of society" (1973:260).

The sportswriter thus has a demanding role which is intensified by the many groups with whom he must interact on a daily basis. He must be responsive to his employer, his competitor, the players, owners and promoters and the public. In addition, he must inform the public responsibly and prepare himself by analyzing and taking a position on many of the social issues pertaining to sport.

Journalistic Professionalism and the Sports Pages

Since the early beginnings of sportswriting, the professionalism of the sportswriter has often come under scrutiny. To many critics, the sportswriter has not lived up to his journalistic responsibilities. One of the reasons for this according to Shecter, a former sportswriter for the New York Post and former editor of 'Look' magazine, is that sportswriters "are constantly recruited on its lowest levels" (1970:11), they possess "intellectual poverty" (1970:11) and furthermore "sports departments are crammed more with sport buffs and not newspapermen" (1970:45).

In the newspaper business, because of the requirements to be

a reputable writer, it is rare to see a former top professional athlete as a sportswriter. These individuals gravitate more to the electronic media. However, many sportswriters have been hired because of their general background with sport and not their journalistic abilities. Previous playing experience does not guarantee a good sportswriter. Riess maintains that it takes a skill to write good sports and that "usually ex-jocks because they are just ex-jocks cannot do justice to sport reporting" (1958:78). Ghose, in answer to the question as to who makes the best sportswriter, states from experience that:

> It seems to me to be very nearly a general truth that these people who know about a game are its worst reporters. ... Inside knowledge of the highest order has nothing to do with good reporting (1974:66).

Although he concedes that sportswriters need a knowledge of the game, he maintains that:

> ... the balance lies somewhere in between and I further suggest that given sufficient knowledge, the principle qualification a reporter needs is that he is a writer of some merit (1974:66).

Cosell also speaks out strongly about ex-athletes being granted automatic admission into the field of journalism:

> What does the ex-athlete know about the who, what, when, where, how and why of a story -- the very nuts and bolts of journalism? How many stories has he been out on and had to investigate and develop? What has been his training for this? How many people has he interviewed? Where has he learned how to pursue an answer to a question and develop an interview -- which in itself, is a form of journalistic art? (1974:215).

Thus, even a sportswriter's peers are very critical of those who enter the profession on the sole basis of being a former athlete. They maintain that if the standards of the profession are to be highly regarded,

recruitment must be based more on journalistic abilities and less on previous playing experience.

Another criticism leveled against the sportswriter is the fact that some have accepted gifts and favours from those people and organizations about whom the sportswriter was to be objectively writing. One former sports promoter, George Weiss, stated in Shecter's The Jocks, "To hell with newspapermen. You can buy them off with a steak" (1970:29). This lack of principle and the bowing to the pressures of sports management and athletes have been considered to be unethical.

McFarlane (1955) also exposed how sports promoters in Montreal obtained favourable publicity from the writers. Some writers accepted free drinks, meals, gifts, all-expense-paid trips, jobs for writing sport programs, money for sportswriters' banquets, various house privileges, and even straight cash payoffs. McFarlane pointed out that:

> ... these affairs are all designed to create situations wherein generosity will be recognized by the recipients. Therefore, the recipients will be under certain obligations to the donors (1955:82).

This situation in Montréal was later substantiated by Ralph Goldston, a former Montréal Alouette football player who stated in Barnes' book, The Plastic Orgasm:

> He (Ted Workman, former owner of the Montréal Alouettes) had those guys in Montréal on a payroll every week, or every month or whenever. It was just like their regular jobs, to write good stuff about the Alouettes. The Government of Canada knows it. And anyone connected with football in Canada knows it (1971:60).

Smith (1976) in a study of Edmonton sportswriters found similar occurrences. Sportswriters were writing articles for sport programs, sport broadcasters were serving as public address men at sporting events and

Christmas gifts were being accepted.

Various reasons account for the writers' involvement in these circumstances. Some try to get close to the sport promoter to acquire more inside information. In the process though, they become hooked because they begin to owe the promoter favourable publicity, particularly for information that has been given "off the record" (McFarlane, 1955). Other writers are just lazy, unprincipled or weak while some feel that they are underpaid and will take anything extra.

Cosell, of ABC television in the United States, further substantiates these views. He has found that, "No more have ethics been a problem than in the sports pages for some writers have had expenses paid by teams and have on the side written promotional content for teams" (1974:204). Allen, a former sportswriter in Toronto, described in Andelman's Sports Fans of the World Unite how Maple Leaf Gardens management tried to control the writers:

> The only possible conclusion, said Allen, "is that they would like every Toronto sportswriter to become a gibbering hybrid of tout, shill, drumbeater, robber-howler, referee baiter, seducer, traducer, prostitute, alibi-hurl, messenger boy, hero worshipper, sandwich man, ticket seller and dupe (1974:50).

Beddoes, a former sportswriter with the Toronto Globe and Mail, reflected how Punch Imlach, former coach of the Toronto Maple Leaf Club tried to keep the sportswriters under "his thumb". If this coach felt he had the sportswriter, "he will give you a news story when you require one, tip you off to something that is happening. That is what I consider a news favour. I consider that a form of payoff" (1970:70).

Many other similar instances, mainly from the American scene are offered in the literature. For example, Francis maintains that the

sportswriter cannot succumb to this pressure, unless he wants to become a huckster", but he must maintain a "quasi-personal" relationship with the actors within the sport environment. He states that when a writer identifies too closely with the home team, he "loses his objectivity and when the team loses on the field, he suffers from personal defeat" (1967:720).

Therefore, it appears that to be a credible journalist, it is a necessity to maintain an arm's length away from those about whom one is reporting. This, of course, is easier said than done, particularly when a sports reporter must closely relate to the people he is covering, who consider him to be little more than a propaganda arm of the program. Andelman (1974) has no sympathy with this omission of criticism because of the closeness of relationships. He points out that political writers are in the same position yet they are able to maintain their objectivity. However, Dickey qualifies this viewpoint with a dose of realism:

> If film critic Pauline Kael pans a movie or criticizes an actor she does so with the knowledge that she need not see anybody she had criticized. A sportswriter may have to go to an athlete he has criticized for a story the next day. Only a political writer has the same kind of problem, and his is eased by the fact that few politicians are in a position to scare him physically. The average athlete has no trouble scaring the average sportswriter (1974:88).

Some sportswriters who have been critical and exposed wrongs, have sometimes been ridiculed by the sport establishment, barred from conducting post game interviews or even physically threatened (Smith, 1974).

Criticism is also directed at sportswriters for their lack of social consciousness. The world of the sportswriter has been called the "playpen" of journalism. Journalists and sport sociologists have

felt the sportswriter has abrogated his role as journalist by avoiding social issues. Edwards maintains that sportswriters are "insensitive to the magnitude and impact of the social problems that are festering beneath their own noses" (1969:32). They neglect to expose areas such as racism and drug abuse that exist in sport. Shecter believes that sportswriters have a strong need to be in the presence of athletes thus they carefully stay away from critical articles. He adds, "... there is a strong possibility that the newspaper needs the team more than the team needs the newspaper" (1970:59).

Beddoes also maintains that sportswriters lack social responsibility when he states:

> I think that people in sport generally are the biggest squares I know. I think there is a lack of sociological sense in my kind of people. ... ... We don't come to grips with issues outside of who won or lost. I do believe we lack some relevance (1970:74).

Two other prominent sports journalists reflect Beddoes' views, yet provide different explanations for the phenomenon. Cosell finds that, in general, sportswriters "were neglecting the great issues in sports on the grounds that the fans were not interested" (1974:204). Whereas, Red Smith, renowned sports columnist in New York, flatly claims that many sportswriters are substandard:

> I don't like to admit it but there are as many incompetents ... among sportswriters as among doctors and grocers and shoe salesmen. Some of them are childish, think the world is bounded by the outfield fences. Well, obviously, anyone who thinks that way is not only a knothead with a serious case of arrested development, but is gonna be a lousy sportswriter too (Stein, 1978:63).

More recently, the image and stature of the sportswriter has lessened because of the immediacy of radio and television. Through these

media, the public hears and sees firsthand the happenings and results of sporting events. This has had a double effect on the sportswriter. The importance and significance of what he writes is now not as vital to the public as it once was. Also players and owners are no longer giving the sportswriter as much of their time because they gain more exposure through other media, particularly television.

The professionalism of the sportswriter has thus often come under scrutiny. The low recruitment standards and nonexistent ethical standards of the past have been strongly criticized. Despite some of these negative features of the sportswriting business though, there are indications that the field is improving. Douglas Fisher, a Canadian political columnist and co-author of the 1969 Canadian Task Force Report on Sport, stated that the quality of sportswriting was quite good when compared to political writers:

> I would say that the level of sports journalism, particularly in the larger newspapers, is comparable to the level of political journalism. Neither one is consistently excellent but it is fair (1969:3).

One may question whether Fisher was complimentary when he compared sportswriters to political writers but he, at least, sees them as being equal, whereas most critics do not.

The biggest change, however, according to Shaw has been:

> ... the coming of sociology to the sports pages and the concomitant shift of the sports pages away from its traditional image as the toy department of the daily newspaper - a sandbox peopled by the idiot children of journalism (1975:1).

Larry Merchant, a New York sportswriter, also feels that progress is being made and that:

> ... we are climbing out of the ooze. We are more

> willing to confront the social issues and deal with the psychological forces. ... We find that truth is more interesting than fiction (1976:vii).

It appears that although the sportswriter might not be perfect, he is gradually becoming more 'professional'. One of the reasons that might account for this is that a formal educational background now seems to be a pre-requisite for the hiring of sportswriters. McGonagle suggests that, "It's almost impossible to get a good sportswriting job without an education" (1975:95). He further states that an all-round education is invaluable "since sports relate in some ways to all areas of life and living" (1975:96). Certain writers have done well with little formal education but as Gelfand points out the trend is toward more highly educated people. His reasoning is as follows:

> To play his role more effectively, however, the sportswriter must understand the social significance of his speciality and interpret this significance to his readers. He cannot be simply a cheerleader in print, an 'old grad' who never grew up, a writer blind to obvious shading of responsible conduct among players, coaches, managers and executives. If sports deserve the important place they occupy in our society today, they should contribute to the building of a desirable cultural tone. The writer with a broad educational background is better prepared to help sport contribute to the national welfare while keeping a proper perspective and helping his readers or listeners to keep theirs. In short, he should be both a specialist and a generalist (1969:5).

The overall stature of the sportswriter is changing because the sportswriter's approach to the job is also changing. This is reflected by Shaw's perception of how sports pages are changing:

> 1. Where once the athlete was romanticized, glamorized, even mythified, he is now analyzed, criticized, even condemned.
> 2. Where once a sporting event was generally treated as seriously as a holy crusade, now

sports are often dealt with lightly, humourously, even sarcastically or scornfully.

3. Where once a sports personality story rarely included more than a superficial, sophomoric account of the athlete's heroic on-the-field exploits and, perhaps a brief mention of his inevitably 'lovely wife' now such stories try to probe the athlete's development as an individual, his relations with others (on and off the field) and his attitude toward a whole range of personal political and psychological issues.
4. Where once the sports pages contained some of worst writing in the newspapers, now - on any given day - the best piece of pure writing in some very good newspapers might well be found on the sports pages.
5. Where once most sportswriters functioned as sycophantic 'housemen' cheering on the local team in print, most sportswriters now have achieved a level of professional detachment, in print at least, and the rooter is a dwindling breed (Shaw, 1975).

The sportswriters now appear to be reflecting a broader scope and assuming a social perspective representative of the role. This progress is due in part to better people being attracted to the field, the stronger competitive nature of the business and no doubt the criticism that has been injected from both within and outside the sportswriters social system. More experimentation is now beginning to occur in the field, though this is by no means widespread, and writers and their newspapers are backing away from the close attachments previously held with the sport establishment.

Summary

This chapter provided a synopsis of the literature written on sportswriting. A brief history of the development of the sports page was outlined. It was seen that the advent of the electronic media, radio and television, prompted sportswriters to be more analytical and to

provide more behind-the-scene insights into the sporting activities. An analysis of the content of the sports page emphasized a coverage of professional sports. Amateur sport was not given as much space, one of the main reasons appearing to be the poor public relation abilities of the amateur organizers. An example was also given of some of the descriptive language in the sports page. It was further seen that educational background would not guarantee a person being a good writer, only constant writing would assist in developing this ability. The impact of the media, both generally and sport specific, was analyzed and theories of media impact were presented. It was seen that the media have the potential to affect attitudes and behaviour, however, the degree of the impact depended upon multiple variables. The role and relationships of the sportswriter were seen not to be as simple as one might perceive. The sportswriter was seen to have a complex role to play as on a daily basis he was required to interact with many groups of individuals each having different expectations of the writer. Finally, the professionalism of the sportswriter was discussed in detail. The recruitment and ethical standards of the sportswriters in the past were seen to be substandard. However, a more recent analysis suggested that these faults were generally being rectified and that the sportswriter was assuming a more responsible position in the field of journalism. In the next chapter, a review of the methods and procedures used in this study will be outlined.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Discussion of Participant Observation Technique

Participant observation technique in its pure form was not used in this study since the author was unable to assume the actual role of a sportswriter. However, since elements of the technique were used, a discussion is warranted. Participant observation is a social science methodology which is qualitative in nature and is used in social settings and relationships where it is assumed that in order to best understand these settings and relationships, the researcher should immerse himself with others in that social environment (Bogdan, 1972:3). Its most common usage as a research methodology is to generate theory and to study social change. Participant observation is not a single method but a style of combining several methods toward a common goal. The method may include: direct observation, interviewing, questionnaires, document analysis and direct participation (Bollens and Marshall, 1973). Previous participant observation studies conducted by Whyte (1955) and Tompkins (1969) were used as guides in the implementation of this study. In the role of participant observer, the researcher resembles a newspaper reporter who must observe, ask questions and report in order to perform his job properly.

Dean, Eichorn and Dean outline the advantages and disadvantages of participant observation (1969:20-21). The advantages are that

it provides an opportunity to acquire richer, more descriptive data which is sometimes sacrificed in quantitative research. Reports that are written should contain many quotations to convey the feeling of the situation to make the report more human and to give evidence that things are truly the way one is reporting them. The major advantage of participant observation is that since it is an unstructured approach, changes can be made in the direction of the study as more pertinent information is available and therefore, sampling procedures can have a snowballing effect.

The limitations of the technique are that the accumulation of written data does not lend itself well to statistical analysis. There might also be a tendency for the observer to go 'native' or to empathize too strongly with the individuals being observed, thus distorting the objectivity of the report. There is also a time limitation involved with the procedure, since long periods may be necessary to observe all facets of the organization and even then certain activities may never be accessible. Finally, the mere presence of an observer may affect the group from acting in a normal manner.

One of the major problems that can arise in using this technique is knowing whether the people being interviewed are telling the truth. Dean and Whyte suggest that the observer can never know whether people are telling the truth, but suggest that a more important question is: "What do the informants' statements reveal about their feelings and perceptions and what inferences can be made from them and about the actual environments or events he has experienced?" (1969:114). Zelditch states that although everyone says "'yes' does not need to presume that the rule is obeyed. ... But we may actually begin to believe that we

have found an institutionalized norm" (1969:3).

Ethical questions arise in the use of the technique. Should the observer reveal to the group the real purposes of his presence or explain only general details? It is maintained that in order for the study to be valid and to achieve its purposes, that at times, the whole truth cannot be revealed (Rainwater and Pittman, 1969).

Instrumentation

The specific methodology used in this study consisted of the following:

1. Direct observation of the writer(s) on the job:

Over the time period of the study, April 1, 1977 to July, 1977, the author observed the participants in their work environment both in their offices and at a sporting venue. Data was collected and recorded. On two days, the author attended professional baseball games in the press box with a Globe and Mail baseball writer and had the opportunity to observe writers from the other two newspapers.

The observation of the writers occurred as follows:

- At all three newspapers, the author was welcome to roam, to talk to reporters and read and collect articles.
- While in the company of the writers, the author listened to conversations between the writers themselves and on occasion between the writer and the editor. Afterwards, at the author's residence, the discussions were recorded.
- During informal discussions held with the writers in their office, notes were taken while the writer responded to a particular question posed by the author.
- Observations were not recorded when the writers were either writing their articles or assisting in editing copy.
- Topics of discussion held with the public on the

telephone, or discussions with members of the sport establishment on the telephone were recorded. Also, the times when the writers were reading the articles from the competitor's page were recorded.

- When on-the-scene observation occurred, the results were summarized afterwards at the author's residence.

2. Interviews:

Two types of interviews were conducted. One consisted of casual discussion with the writers during their daily routines. These comments were later recorded either after the discussion within the work environment or immediately after the author left the work environment. The second type of interview was longer and more structured as it was based on a standardized questionnaire.

3. Questionnaire:

A questionnaire was developed which sought information relating to the following categories:

a) a general description of the sportswriter;
b) the sportswriters' perceptions of media impact;
c) the role and function of the sportswriter;
d) the writer's personal views of sport;
e) the ethical standards of sportswriting in Toronto;
f) the content of the sports pages.

The questions were designed to give both open-ended responses and responses based upon multiple-choice selections. Questions on the same theme were repeated in different sections of the questionnaire to see if there was a consistency in responses. Each interview lasted approximately two hours and responses were recorded by hand. All questions pertained to the Toronto sports media only.

Selection of Questions

1. A general description of the sportswriter:

Questions in this section centered on personal attributes of the sportswriter, such as age and educational background and the athletic and writing qualifications that the writer brought to the job.

2. The sportswriters' perceptions of media impact:

It was important to see if the sportswriters themselves had studied or had given consideration to the impact of the media on the public. They were asked specific questions on the possible impact of the sports pages on the public.

3. The role and function of the sportswriter:

The literature outlined what the role of a newspaper writer should be. Questions were asked to discover what the sportswriter felt his role was and to see if these views were consistent with the literature.

4. The writer's personal views of sport:

Since the writer was writing about sport, it was necessary to see the background knowledge he had and the philosophical perspective of sport being brought to the job.

5. The ethical standards of sportswriting in Toronto:

A great deal of the literature was critical of the ethical standards of sportswriters in general. Questions were asked to probe the personal feelings of the writers about their relationships with the sport establishment.

6. The content of the sports pages:

Questions were asked to discover what content was presented and why this content was given emphasis on the sports pages?

Sample

The respondents were selected from all the sports departments of the three Toronto daily newspapers. A list of all the respondents was acquired and attempts were made to interview all the sportswriters in order to test the entire sample. One subject from the Globe and Mail responded to the questionnaire via mail. Also, represented in the sample are the sports editors of each newspaper and all columnists except one. The managing editor of the Globe and Mail was also interviewed.

Procedure

1. A pre-test was done on the questionnaire with a sportswriter from the London Free Press and a sports announcer at Radio Station CFRB in Toronto. The questionnaire was subsequently modified prior to meeting with the respondents.

2. Prior to observing or interviewing any of the writers, a letter was forwarded to the sports editor of each newspaper explaining the purpose of this study and requesting permission to interview members of his staff (Appendix A).

3. Once permission was granted, interviews were arranged. During the introduction to each writer, the general purpose of the study was explained. The interviews were conducted either at the office of each sportswriter or at the office of the author.

Analysis of Data

1. For each of the open-ended questions, a series of dominant responses was identified by the author. This was done by an initial analysis of the answers to each question and a subsequent identification

of the dominant responses. The author then went through each question a second time and categorized the first response to each question under the appropriate main category. In order to verify accuracy of the categorization, the author went through each question a third time.

2. Each of the questions were analyzed according to the following variables: a) all variables grouped, b) employer, c) age, d) educational background, e) work experience, f) newspaper experience, g) past athletic experience. Frequency distributions were done for each question. A complex statistical analysis of the data was not carried out primarily because the methods used in the study did not lend themselves well for this type of quantification. Rather through observation of and discussion with the participants, data was collected which described the environment and attempted to reflect the human dynamics of the situation.

3. Data collected from observation periods was recorded, later reviewed, and included in the results and discussion chapter where applicable.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the methods and procedures used in the implementation of this study. There was direct on-the-job observation of the sample over a four-month time period as well as in-depth interviewing and the collection of secondary documents pertaining to the occupation. In the next chapter, the results of the study will be documented along with a discussion of these results.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

A General Description of the Sportswriters in Toronto

This section deals with an analysis of the background of Toronto sportswriters. Variables such as age, educational background, work experience, and so forth, were considered. The major purpose for asking these questions was to acquire a profile of the sportswriters and an understanding of the type of qualifications they brought to their job.

Table I indicates the number of sportswriters represented in the survey. Approximately 60 percent of all writers in Toronto are employed by the Globe and Mail, with the Star and Sun each employing approximately 20 percent of the sportswriters.

The sportswriters in Toronto are given various assignments by the management of the three newspapers as shown in Table II. As required, a team of writers assists in the coverage of the important events and most writers, although specializing in one sport, cover other sports in the off-season.

The ages of the sportswriters ranged from 20 to over 60 years of age (Table III). One newspaper, the Globe and Mail, employed all the writers between the 20-24 years of age range.

Table IV outlines the educational background of the sports writers. Approximately 80 percent of the sportswriters had some form

TABLE I

Sportswriters Represented in the Sample

NEWSPAPER	NO.	%
1. Globe and Mail	20 of 22	57.1
2. Star	8 of 11	22.9
3. Sun	7 of 8	20.0

TABLE II

Staff Assignments

TOPIC	GLOBE AND MAIL	STAR	SUN
Baseball	x (2 full-time)	x	x
Curling	x		
C.F.L. Football	x (2 full-time)	x	x
Golf	x		
Hockey	x	x	x
Racing-Car	x	x	x
Racing-Harness and Thoroughbred	x (2 full-time)	x	
Skiing	x	x	
Soccer	x	x	
College Sports	x	x	
Column	x (2 full-time)	x (2 full-time)	x
Fitness	x		
Outdoor Sports	x		
Amateur Sports	x	x (1 full-time)	x

TABLE III

Age of the Sportswriters in Toronto

AGE RANGE	NO.	%
1. 20-24	4	11.8
2. 25-34	10	29.4
3. 35-44	12	35.3
4. 45-59	5	14.7
5. 60 and over	3	8.8

of post secondary school education. There was a tendency for the Toronto Star to employ graduates who had a Journalism diploma from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. Sixty-two percent of those interviewed from the Star graduated from Ryerson as compared to only 26 percent from the Globe and Mail and 16.6 percent from the Sun. Although the Globe and Mail and the Sun employed writers from various educational backgrounds, they both had a higher number of university graduates, 36.8 percent and 71 percent respectively, than did the Toronto Star, 12 percent.

The majority of sportswriters interviewed had been involved in sportswriting for over 10 years. This is depicted in Table V. The Toronto Star had no writers with less than five years of experience, with 62.5 percent of those interviewed having over 10 years experience. One quarter of those interviewed at the Globe and Mail had less than five years experience.

The previous employment record of the Toronto sportswriters is shown in Table VI. The Toronto Star was the only paper in the sample to have hired sportswriters who had previous Metro writing experience either in sport or news. The Globe and Mail was the only paper to have hired full-time persons directly from university although these persons had been writing part-time for the Globe while attending school.

The sportswriters were asked about their past involvement in athletics because it was considered that those writers who had previous athletic experience would have more empathy with the athletes about whom they were reporting. Table VII shows that the large majority of sportswriters interviewed had participated either recreationally or competitively as an athlete. The minority who did not have past athletic experience (9.3 percent) were employed by the Globe and Mail. Only one

TABLE IV

Educational Background of the Sportswriters

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	NO.	%
1. Community College (Journalism Diploma)	10	29.4
2. University Degree (Other)	10	29.4
3. Secondary School	7	20.6
4. University Degree (Journalism)	4	11.8
5. University Degree (Partial)	3	8.8

TABLE V

Sportswriting Experience of the Writers

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	NO.	%
1. 0-4	6	17.6
2. 5-9	11	32.4
3. 10 and over	17	50.0

TABLE VI

Previous Employment

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT	NO.	%
1. Metro Paper Sports	12	40.0
2. Metro Paper News	11	36.7
3. Small Paper News	3	10.0
4. College/University	2	6.7
5. Small Paper Sports	2	6.7

TABLE VII

Previous Athletic Experiences of the Sportswriters

ATHLETIC EXPERIENCE	NO.	%
1. General and High School	20	62.5
2. University (Varsity)	8	25.0
3. None	3	9.3
4. Professional	1	3.2

person had professional sport experience both as a football player and a wrestler. However, this person also had a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and had experience as a news, police and features reporter prior to accumulating 18 years in newspaper sportswriting. At the time of the study, he was assistant sport editor of the paper and has since been promoted to Executive Editor of the newspaper's sister paper in Edmonton, Alberta.

Regardless of their employer, age or educational background, the large majority of writers considered that they were hired because of their previous work experience, either in sports or news, and because they were good writers (Table VIII). A very small minority of the sportswriters felt that their educational background was a factor in being hired.

Table IX displays the various ways the Toronto sportswriters felt a person could prepare for a job in sportswriting. The majority of writers interviewed considered it to be very important to have a well-rounded educational background which encompassed many subject areas such as sociology, psychology, business, economics, law and so forth. A Physical Education degree was felt to be helpful but not necessary. Of those writers who had only high school education, the majority (75 percent) also considered having a broad educational background to be very important. Another segment of the sample considered a general reporting background to be most important because it enabled one to acquire experience in writing, asking questions and getting the facts straight. The overall reactions of the writers to this question varied. One writer felt that a strong educational background was important because:

TABLE VIII

Sportswriters' Perceptions of Why They Were Hired

QUALIFICATIONS	NO.	%
1. Experience	15	50.0
2. Good writer	7	23.3
3. Desk experience	3	10.0
4. Educational background	2	6.7
5. No special reason	2	6.7
6. Could ask good questions	1	3.3

TABLE IX

Avenues of Preparation for a Sportswriting Career

PREPARATION METHODS	NO.	%
1. Educational background	12	35.3
2. General reporting background	8	23.5
3. Writing experience	5	14.7
4. Knowledge and interest in sports	3	8.8
5. Journalism course	3	8.8
6. Be prepared to start at the bottom	2	5.9
7. Athletic background	1	2.9

> All the good sportswriters have an education. A good journalist should be able to cover everything. You want him to know more than just a jockstrap. You need a broad general education so you can go beyond and say something about the human condition. Take subjects such as English, History, Psychology, Economics and Sociology.

Another reason for an advanced education was because sport had 'become more demanding'. The business aspects of sport were becoming more prominent, legal proceedings were in the news more and human interest stories were beginning to take on a major emphasis requiring a social, psychological perspective.

Some writers did not place a strong emphasis on education even though they did have some form of post secondary school education themselves. They considered practical experience to be more important. Although many felt that past athletic experience was helpful, the majority agreed that at least an interest in sport was essential. They felt that writers that did not have this interest were not committed to the job and subsequently left sportswriting very early. On the other hand, three writers considered it to be beneficial if the sportswriter did not have sports background. These writers, they said, tended to be more objective. However, it should be stated that the writers who had this opinion, who themselves were good writers but did not have the 'interest' as stated earlier, lasted only a few years in sportswriting.

The question of salary was raised since it was considered that low salaries may account for some of the unethical practices outlined by McFarlane (1955).

The sportswriters were candid in answering this question (Table X). The salaries received appeared to be quite reasonable. For example, all sportswriters at the Toronto Star were making more than

$20,000 a year. The sportswriters in Toronto, based upon years of experience and ability, have the potential to make within the range of $40-50,000 per year from their papers. They are also paid for overtime work and can make extra money in contract work (e.g. radio programs). All sportswriters in Toronto also belong to a guild or union and are classified by experience. They have the same classification scale as other writers in other departments.

There is no set manner for a sportswriter to be upwardly mobile in sportswriting. If a person is a good writer and is lucky, he can proceed very quickly to being a columnist which is the highest writing position to have. In general terms, a person progresses as follows: he writes part-time for the paper (students can work for the paper in the summertime or while in school); he works full-time but is given a "grab bag" of assignments, mainly the insignificant ones, such as a Karate meet; if he has proven himself as a capable writer who can do an assignment and if there is an opening, he is given a regular beat to cover; if he has proven himself and there is an opening, he is given a column to write full-time.

To say journalists use sportswriting as a stepping stone to other jobs in the journalism field would not be a totally accurate statement. It does happen occasionally. Some of those who have moved on occupy the following occupations: two are political columnists for the same paper; one writes a daily city column for the same paper; two writers moved across town to other papers to write city articles; one became an executive editor for his paper; one became a players' agent; another has become a political speech writer. However, two well-known writers took a sabbatical from sportswriting to write columns in other sections of

TABLE X

Salary Scale of Toronto Sportswriters

SALARY RANGE	NO.	%
1. $10-15,000	3	9.4
2. $16-20,000	9	28.1
3. over $20,000	20	62.5

the newspaper but returned to write sports because of the writing flexibility and their interest in sport.

Sportswriters work mixed hours due to the travel and the varied schedule of sports events. There is a great deal of weekend work involved but they are given two days off a week, these two days generally never being the same. Columnists and those writers who have a 'beat' to cover are generally left on their own to do their work. The sports editors, however, produce a weekly assignment schedule to ensure that all upcoming events worthy of attention are covered. When writers are at home, they are in the office every day. Writers at the Toronto Star are there in the morning from approximately 9.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon writing articles or speaking on the phone to clients. The writers at the morning papers, the Globe and Mail and the Sun, generally enter the office at approximately 1.00 p.m. to do any work required and then head out to cover their beat work later in the day.

A person who covers a 'beat' concentrates his whole time on covering the activity of the assigned team. It appears that no special knowledge of the sport is a pre-requisite for a person to be assigned a beat. If a person has proven writing ability and the opportunity for a beat is there, the person is given the beat. Some editors and writers feel that it is important not to give a beat to a person who is ingrained in the sport since the unfamiliar person may write better for the general public. He may make some tactical errors at first but it is felt a person "has to start somewhere".

An example of a schedule for a 'beat' sportswriter is outlined. It is that of a writer covering the professional football team, the Toronto Argonauts.

TIME

1. Day of the Game:	A game in Toronto is scheduled at 8.00 p.m. The writer arrives at the stadium at 6.00 p.m. He is on the field with the players, gets some quotes. He is presented with the rosters. A light meal is provided by the home team. After the game, he goes to the locker room and questions the players and coaches on the game. His story is then filed for the paper the next day.
2. Day After the Game:	Generally, he calls the coach to inquire about any injuries to the players and to find out if there was anything revealing on the films.
3. The Second and Third Days After the Game:	He writes feature stories possibly on a player who had a good game or on some other aspect of the team.
4. Two Days Before the Next Game:	The writer thinks of the game coming up. He talks to the players and coaches of both teams about the upcoming game.
5. The Day Before the Game:	There is usually a press conference held by the two opposing coaches and this is covered.

Whether a writer is working a beat or writing a column, daily deadlines must be met. Sportswriters have some of the toughest deadlines especially when teams are playing away, across different time zones. One feature writer who brought an outsider's look to sport, commented on the deadlines, "In covering sports you have to fight fierce deadlines. It's good training for other departments." The deadlines, however, are hardest on the writers who write for the morning newspapers. Outlined in Table XI are the deadlines for the three Toronto newspapers. As will be seen later, these deadlines place a great deal of pressure on the sportswriters, so much so that some of them leave the business.

TABLE XI

Daily Deadlines of Newspapers in Toronto

Globe and Mail:	Columnist deadline:	2.00 p.m.
	Coast to coast deadline:	6.00 p.m.
	Ontario deadline:	10.00 p.m.
	Metro Toronto deadline:	12.00 p.m.; 1.30 p.m.
Star:	Monday to Friday Editions:	4.00-5.00 p.m.
	Saturday and Sunday Editions	10.30 p.m.; 12.00 midnight
Sun:	Monday to Friday Editions:	11.30 p.m.
	Sunday Editions:	11.00 p.m.

While observing the baseball writers at two of the Blue Jay baseball games, the following routine was followed. Game time was at 7.30 p.m. At 5.30 p.m., the beat reporters and many of the columnists arrived at the ball park. They went down to the field where the players were taking batting practice and mingled with the players and coaches talking and acquiring information. At 7.00 p.m., all the writers were to be off the playing field. At that time, they went upstairs and had a meal in a cafeteria situated behind the press box. Upon entering the cafeteria, there was a table where sheets containing up-to-date statistics on both teams and any recent press releases from the Blue Jay baseball club were available to the writers. In the cafeteria, the writers talked to other reporters and broadcasters from the visiting team's city and read through the statistics and press releases. Just before game time, the writers went to the press box. If they wanted, they could take peanuts, chips, pop, etc., with them. Some did. On the other hand, one writer, a columnist, considered it unprofessional to take this food into the press box while working. He felt that it reflected receiving a "freebie" from the sport establishment.

During the game, reporters from the morning papers were writing running copy so that they could meet the deadlines for the earlier editions of their paper. Periodically, they would give what was typed to a young man in the press box who immediately filed the copy with their papers. While the game was in progress, periodic messages would be relayed to the press via a speaker system in the press box manned by the public relations person for the Blue Jays. Messages consisted of items such as the official attendance at the ball game, how the official scorer ruled a play and any special events that were

upcoming. After the game, the writers went to both the home and visiting teams' dressing rooms to talk to both the coaches and players. Quotes were obtained mostly from players who had played a major role in the game. Afterwards, the writers from the two morning papers went upstairs to an available room to complete their articles. The articles were then filed. The last reporter left the ball park at 11.30 p.m., his work completed for the evening.

The Toronto sports columnists have a more flexible routine than the beat reporters since they do not have to write on the specifics of a game. They attempt to write columns that are topical in the sport environment. They were asked if they had some spare columns placed in a file that were pulled out on days when they felt stale or unprepared to write. They stated they had ideas filed in their minds but not written columns since they wanted to remain as topical and up-to-date as possible. Columnists also have tighter deadlines than beat reporters.

When the writers and columnists are on the road, they generally associate with the writers from the other papers. At times, there might be a meal or drink or conversation with the coaches or athletes to obtain information but there is no constant socializing on an informal basis. When there is time during the day, writers also pass the time in various ways. Some read, others write articles, some take in cultural events such as visiting museums, others go to the theatre, and so forth. Most often, on overnight trips, there is only time to travel into a city, write and file the story and travel out.

The extensive travel done by the writers is not only hard on themselves but also on their family life. The writers may be on the road for four or five weekends in a row and it is very rare that a wife

accompanies her husband. This makes it difficult for personal relationships to grow. However, the extensive travel comes with the territory and people try to cope with it. Figures are not available from Statistics Canada, but the divorce rate may be higher for sportswriters than for people in other occupations.

The Sportswriters' Perceptions of Media Impact

During informal discussions, the writers and their editors were asked about their perceptions of the impact of their medium. The majority considered that the paper did have an impact but they could not determine in specific terms the degree of this impact. Two writers were adamant that the sports pages did not have any impact, since people generally interpreted things for themselves. One of these writers, however, thought that television had an impact. Another writer was somewhat confused about the effect. He stated that despite the papers' criticism of the play of the Argos, people kept on going out to see them whereas exposure given to the now defunct Toronto Toro hockey club did not boost attendance. Several writers also stated that despite coverage for certain events, attendance did not increase. Since one writer consistently received feedback from coaches and athletes on articles he had written, he definitely considered the paper had an impact. Another writer felt the paper had an effect but only on what was reported. "People can only know what is said". This point was emphasized by an associate reporter who said that one hockey player for the Toronto Maple Leafs was held up to be a fine fellow when in reality he was "the most conceited, arrogant guy around".

Some of the in-depth articles that had been researched brought

about change. For example, an article written on November 30, 1976, in Toronto Globe and Mail on the negligence of players' agents had some effect. One of the agents eventually ended up in jail. Another article (note Appendix E) on December 21, 1977 in the Globe and Mail, entitled: "N.H.L. Governors Pull Plug on High-Living Subsidiary" resulted in changes being made in the National Hockey League Services' Office.

One of the editors, considering the paper's impact, felt that the criticism by the papers of violence in hockey helped to bring about N.H.L. rule changes to cut back on the violence. Another editor considered that the information conveyed in the sports pages gave fans something to talk about. He stated, "Fans look to the paper for information. The articles should be controversial and make the fans think. The articles should give them opinions".

Perhaps, one writer placed the impact of the sports pages into perspective when he said, "Yes, the medium has an effect but not as much as the writers think".

At the time the interviews were taking place, there was a great deal of controversy about the violence in the sport of hockey. Questions were asked of the writers to determine if they: had a view on what constituted violence; considered violence to exist in sport; and finally, felt the media fostered this violence. The sportswriters' personal definitions of what constituted violence in sport are shown in Table XII. Some of the writers interviewed did not have a fixed definition of violence but had some general thoughts. One stated that he didn't honestly know. He thought that fighting wasn't violence, but that stick swinging was and finally stated that, "... I never took time to think about it". Another stated, "It's a great feeling when you see it". One writer

TABLE XII

Writers' Personal Definitions of What Constitutes Violence in a Sporting Context

DEFINITION	NO.	%
1. To inflict injury willfully	13	46.4
2. Conduct beyond the rules	7	25.0
3. Undisciplined retaliation	4	14.3
4. Physical, mental, emotional conflict in varying degrees	2	7.1
5. Verbal violence is as harmful as physical violence	1	3.6
6. A premeditated action to physically harm someone	1	3.6

asked if someone would define violence for him because "... what's violence in one sport, isn't in another (e.g. hockey versus football)". Others felt that violence in football existed but it was 'controlled' and 'prepared for'. Finally, to bring a comparative touch to the discussion, one writer quipped, "There's more violence on Bay Street than in the Maple Leaf Gardens."

With respect to violence in sport, 94 percent of the sportswriters considered that violence did exist in sport and 72 percent considered that the sport media fostered this violence. Some writers considered that the sports pages reinforced the violence in sport "by playing up some people. Even reporting it brings people to the forefront". Even though several writers stated that pictures of fights were presented for artistic purposes, some stated, "the number of pictures were out of proportion" and that, "... heroes were made of it". There also seemed to be a great deal of individuality in the manner that the reporting was done. "Stories were based upon the 'whim of the individual'" and "... some blew it up more than others". Phrasing such as "really cleaned his clock", was considered to be promoting violence.

Recently, the sportswriters' stand on reporting violence appears to have changed. Several writers commented that whereas the papers tended to play up the violence before, the tendency was to now "play it down". This change of approach coincided with an unsportsmanlike display of conduct by a Team Canada hockey team in a European competition. The public generally reacted negatively to Canada's performance and the reporters tended to 'reflect' this public displeasure. However, some writers stated that if it wasn't for the European exposure, people wouldn't have accepted the stories in the sports pages. And one writer,

emphasizing the fickle nature of the reporting, stated that, "... three years ago, we would have reported it in a humourous way. Now everyone is up in arms; it's very hypocritical." Some of the editors who commented on this question, felt that "they certainly drew attention to it", but they were critical of the violence. Another editor, however, admitted, "... we must sell papers. A balance must be struck."

The Role and Function of the Sportswriter

The sportswriters were given a list of several statements concerning the newspaper's functions and asked to agree or disagree with each statement. Ninety-four percent considered it the role of the paper to inform the public about sport. To the statement that the paper should reflect the public's attitude about sport, 67 percent agreed. However, only one-third of the writers felt it was the newspaper's role to either educate or influence the public's attitude about sport.

Closely associated with this question, the writers were asked what they thought their particular role was. Table XIII displays their responses. Some writers felt it was not their responsibility to be a social conscience for the public. One writer was so conscientious about reporting accurately that he always phoned the person he was quoting, in order to confirm the accuracy of the quote. Another considered the function of the sportswriter to "get across the skills, demands and drama of the game rather than the business". One of the writers who was highly recognized by his peers outlined his role: "You find out all you can and print all you find out." Another said that you give your best but if everything if "100% with the sport establishment, you're probably not doing your job".

TABLE XIII

Respondents' Perception of Their Function

As A Sportswriter

FUNCTION	NO.	%
1. To inform	25	73.5
2. To give behind the scenes insight	4	11.8
3. To entertain	3	8.8
4. To convey the human aspect	1	2.9
5. To sell papers	1	2.9

The sports editors did not consider the sportswriters as being unique. The writers must simply "convey information about sport in a way that would make it understandable to the audience". One of the managing editors affirmed the sportswriter's role as being to inform but that the sportswriter "was no longer an attachment to the club. Meal money used to be paid by the club but not anymore." Finally, another sports editor confirmed that the main function was "to sell. It would be hypocritical not to say so. I would be fired if the paper didn't sell". He added philosophically that "the sportswriter should have a strong belief in physical fitness -- a healthy mind in a healthy body."

The sportswriters were then asked to list the qualities that a good sportswriter should have (Table XIV). Each of the writers was requested to list a number of sportswriters whom they thought were good sportswriters in Toronto. Those writers most often mentioned in all the responses are listed in Table XV. Five of the ten writers listed are from the Toronto Star, a paper which has the most experienced staff of the three newspapers. Only three writers were considered from the Globe and Mail which employed the largest sport staff. These three writers were new to the Globe's staff, having less than four years employment.

The sportswriters were asked to comment on statements made concerning the image of the sportswriter. Shecter (1970) had said that the sportswriters were sport buffs not newspapermen in the true sense of the word. While 53 percent of the writers disagreed with Shecter, the remaining 47 percent agreed, many of the these having a university education.

TABLE XIV

Respondents' Appraisal of the Qualities

That Make a Good Sportswriter

QUALITY	NO.	%
1. Writing ability	9	26.5
2. Objective	8	23.5
3. Accurate	6	17.6
4. Integrity	5	14.7
5. Places events into perspective	3	8.8
6. Asks the right questions	1	2.9
7. Sense of humour	1	2.9
8. Versatile	1	2.9

TABLE XV

The Top 10 Sportswriters in Toronto as Recognized by Their Peers

	NAME	EMPLOYER	POSITION	VOTES
1.	Milt Dunnell	Star	Columnist	27
2.	Jim Proudfoot	Star	Columnist	18
3.	Trent Frayne	Sun	Columnist	17
4.	Jim Coleman	Syndicated Columnist		11
5.	Jim Christie	Globe and Mail	Hockey, Golf	10
6.	Jim Kernaghan	Star	Hockey, Soccer, Boxing	9
7.	Al Abel	Globe and Mail	Columnist	8
8.	Al Sokol	Star	Football	8
9.	Frank Orr	Star	Hockey	8
10.	Christie Blatchford	Globe and Mail	Columnist	8

The lack of social conscience was a criticism directed at sportswriters by Edwards (1969). Forty-eight percent of the writers disagreed with the criticism, 37 percent agreed while 15 percent were undecided. Once again, the majority of those writers with a university education and also the writers new to sportswriting were among those who agreed while the majority of the writers with a diploma in Journalism and more sportswriting experience were among those who disagreed.

Is sportswriting hero-worshipful as Andelman (1974) stated? Two-thirds of the writers said "no" while the remaining one-third agreed.

There are both the joys and pains in any job, this being no less true in the field of sportswriting. In Table XVI are seen the rewards and satisfactions of the sportswriting job. The writers also considered that sport allowed them the freedom to be descriptive and to develop their own writing skill. Two of the columnists found their jobs extremely fulfilling, one stating that, "... being a columnist on the Globe and Mail can be the best possible job in the country with the exception of the three hours writing preparation", since it is a painstaking business to be a good writer, to write creatively and with flair. The other writer took pride in his job and considered "sportswriting to be as valid an occupation as most others and more important than others."

The negative aspects of the sportswriters' job were outlined in Table XVII. Approximately 25 percent of the writers interviewed had critical comments concerning the athletes they had to deal with. Some athletes were seen as "selfish", while four of the writers classified hockey players as "dumb", having "little class", "boorish", and "down to earth but not all that bright. It's difficult to get meaningful and

TABLE XVI

Rewards and Satisfactions of Being a Sportswriter

REWARD	NO.	%
1. Recognition	13	40.6
2. Doing a good job	7	21.9
3. Meeting interesting people	4	12.5
4. Doing what I enjoy	4	12.5
5. Good money	3	9.4
6. Instant results	1	3.1

TABLE XVII

Dislikes of the Sportswriter's Job

DISLIKES	NO.	%
1. The long hours	9	31.0
2. Other writers	5	17.2
3. The athletes	4	13.8
4. The promoters	4	13.8
5. The travel	2	6.9
6. The beat	2	6.9
7. The hero-worship	1	3.4
8. The dishonesty of management	1	3.4
9. The monotony	1	3.4

intelligent comments." One football writer did not enjoy the "egotistical" nature of the American players and one baseball writer classified the players as "country hicks".

The problem that writers had with promoters resulted not as much from the professional team sports but from those who staged individual events such as horse racing and car racing and some promoters who operated at the semi-pro level (e.g. baseball).

The sportswriters were unanimous in that professional hockey in the city offered no promoter pressure because its publicity and promotion were non-existent. Since Maple Leaf Gardens was consistently sold out, there apparently was little need for a high powered promotion campaign.

Some of the writers were critical of their peers. One writer commented on the tendency to worship super heroes. Several were discouraged about those who did not "care about their profession and try to improve their craft". They also commented on those writers who took everything seriously and left out the fun and humourous nature of sport. There was a lack of trust by a few writers toward the owners and management who did not always speak honestly. They tended to mislead rather than inform. Several writers also mentioned that beat work was "boring". One writer who had 15 years experience in newswork but was called upon to provide an "outsider's" look at sport stated that the writing style tended to be a "clichéd style" and that there was a tendency toward "pack journalism". He amplified this comment by saying that the writers seemed to be "bound by tradition" and everyone "seemed to offer the same opinion".

It was discovered that some of these dislikes resulted in some writers leaving the profession. Table XVIII lists some of the major reasons why sportswriters leave the occupation. Some writers felt that the repetition involved in sportswriting was "debilitating". You see the "same stories over and over again". One writer considered this problem to be the newspaper's fault for not covering more sports and adding more variety.

The sportswriting occupation carries its daily pressures. These are shown in Table XIX. The writers said they were not worried by threats from athletes and coaches but some received them. Football writers seemed to be the most prone to being threatened. One football coach threatened to punch a writer; another coach tried to beat up one writer. A football player threatened to cut off a writer's arm and another football player grabbed and pinned a writer up against the wall. A manager also threatened to shave off a writer's hair.

Other threats to writers ranged from breaking a writer's kneecap, to throwing bricks in one's home, to a female reporter receiving menacing phone calls at home. The threats were received as a result of the coach or athlete feeling a writer's comments were overly critical or negative or unfounded. Although the threats in themselves could not be justified, the reasons behind the threats at times were justified. In fact, some of the writers admitted that at times for whatever reason, they have not had all the fact straight and, as will be seen later, say that they have been reprimanded by their editors when this occurred.

In order to avoid threats or avoid having communication lines closed, some beat reporters who know of a sensitive story pass the lead on to a columnist removed from the situation. The story is reported

TABLE XVIII

Why Sportswriters Say They Leave the Occupation

REASON	NO.	%
1. For more money	19	57.6
2. Long hours	3	9.1
3. Just for a change	3	9.1
4. Boredom of beat work	2	6.1
5. Disillusioned with sport	2	6.1
6. Ignorant people	2	6.1
7. Too much pressure	1	3.0
8. Too much travel	1	3.0

TABLE XIX

Pressures of the Sportswriting Occupation

TYPE OF PRESSURE	NO.	%
1. Deadlines	23	69.1
2. Competition with other papers	4	12.1
3. Being a good writer daily	2	6.1
4. Criticism from teams/ athletes	2	6.1
5. Promoters	1	3.0
6. Getting the facts straight	1	3.0

yet the beat reporter maintains his/her relationship with the team.

When asked whether they should merely report a story or whether they should inject their own opinion, the majority of the writers (94 percent) felt obligated to put the event into perspective by offering an opinion. The writers who disagreed with this felt that "reporters should report the facts and opinion is left to the columnist". However, the editors felt that in sports, as compared to general news, a writer was able to be more descriptive. One editor noted that since most readers witnessed the sport event on television, they wanted to know what the sportswriter thought. "I expect my beat men to offer their opinion", he stated. Another editor felt the primary responsibility was to report, but since sport was "a theatrical business", the sportswriters were "critics" and were obliged to "analyze" the event and provide "interesting quotes".

The writers (100 percent) considered it their right to criticize athletes and management, but in answering this question, they qualified their "every right to criticize". A dominant response was for them to "be fair and to get the facts straight" before they criticized. Some felt it was "the easiest thing in the world to criticize" and in support of this statement, some felt that writers should "not criticize for the sake of criticism". One writer considered the "typewriter to a powerful weapon" and since people written about had no easy recourse, it was important for all writers to have integrity".

There was the opinion that some writers criticized to make a name for themselves. They criticized "to be outrageous". For one writer, "it was more important to be read than liked". If the athletes or management are criticized, should they be given equal space for reply

or rebuttal? The majority of writers felt that if the athletes or management did not agree with the criticism, their comments should be placed right in the article, not afterward in some letter to the editor. Those that replied in the negative did not have any definite reason for stating their case.

The majority of the writers (61 percent) agreed with the statement that the sports pages in Toronto appeared to present one side of an issue and not the pros and cons at the same time. Those who disagreed with this statement felt that this type of situation rarely occurred in Toronto. Those that agreed offered various reasons for this happening. One writer stated that, "... sometimes you don't have time to go after the persons to get their side of the story", but another countered this by saying that when this happens "it's just laziness by the writer". One writer felt that both sides were not presented since it makes "for a good follow-up the next day", and another stated that, "sometimes you get overpowered by the angle" and therefore, lose your objectivity. At times, personalities get in the way and writers "go after athletes and don't let up". Others get too involved in themselves and "sometimes do it to prove you're a big shot".

In order to investigate the working relationship between the writers and management, the following series of questions were considered. When asked about writing standards they have to meet, it was discovered that none of the Toronto papers had any formal written standards other than style books outlining good grammar, concise writing, and so forth. The Toronto Star writers, however, were expected to have better written stories that the morning papers since their later deadlines permitted them to develop a story. One Globe and Mail writer

frankly stated that, "You know your standards once you read your competition".

The editors of the papers tend to be the guardians or "gatekeepers" of material that is published. In view of this, writers were asked if they had ever been reprimanded for articles they had written. Approximately, 70 percent of them had received some form of reprimand. The most dominant reprimand was for writers missing a "story". In addition, the lack of fairness and accuracy or articles were criticized. One writer was taken to task for being "overly critical". Another didn't "adequately present someone's side of the story". Another was "honestly wrong on stories". Libellous comments were edited. One writer was being sued for the second time. Lack of objectivity also resulted in a rebuke to one writer because "the editor felt I was being a public relations man for the Toros".

With respect to having professional development days for their writers, the Toronto papers did not have any nor did they have weekly or monthly meetings to talk about common concerns. A few writers felt that professional development days were a waste of time. An attempt was made by the Ontario Sportswriters and Broadcasters Association to have professional development days but these did not occur. Many writers considered that some form of open dialogue would be helpful. Some of the reasons offered were:

- "we could discuss problems and ways we could all improve"
- "a young staff should be developed more"
- "sometimes you forget things, get into bad habits that your peers could point out"
- "it never hurts to get fresh ideas"

An interesting sidelight to this point was that 80 percent of those

writers with community college education favoured having some form of professional development whereas 69 percent of those with university background did not.

Sixty-seven percent of the writers responded that they would appreciate receiving more assistance and leadership from their editors. Some forms of assistance that the sportswriters would like to receive are:

- "I would like some story ideas; also comments on writing style"
- "we could take a common stand on some issues"
- "everybody is presently well on his own"
- "the younger fella could be given more direction"
- "the editor could assist in acquiring contacts"

Some writers felt that the editors were involved in administration not development. It appeared from their comments that the editors generally shyed away from assisting. One tried not to interfere because he felt "they should be trained by the time they get here". Another tried to "give as little assistance as necessary". Rather than speaking to the writers, he sent memos. "If someone does something well, I send a complimentary memo. I limit my memos to a very few. There's nothing worse than a nasty memo". Finally, the need for dialogue seemed apparent from one editor's point of view because he wanted "to know what the young people wanted from him".

The Writer's Personal Views of Sport

Since the sportswriter was writing about sport, it was important to see what sport perspective he was bringing to the job. Sixty-four percent of the respondents agreed that sports were games and should not

be taken seriously. They also thought that a very light-hearted approach should be given to the treatment of sport and several writers were critical of those writers who took everything too seriously. Fifty-four percent of the writers felt that sport could be more fun for the spectator if the players concentrated on the skills of the game rather than, as in hockey, a concentration on overt intimidation and violence. Eighty-three percent agreed with the statement that violence exists in hockey. Although this statistic might seem obvious, it may not have been as high a few years earlier, prior to international competition, when the "violence" was more socially acceptable.

The sportswriters were asked to describe their philosophy of sport. In total, 32 writers replied to the question. Of these, 68 percent of them considered professional sport to be entertainment and that it should not be taken too seriously. This feeling was reflected in such comments as: "It should be enjoyable and fun"; "It should be taken lightly"; "It's a field of entertainment where people can forget their care".

Many writers differentiated between pro and amateur sport. Pro sport was entertainment; amateur sport was the "will to excel". In this view, they felt they should be less critical of amateur sport. Some of the purists did not differentiate between pro and amateur sport. Sport was sport no matter what the level. "To me, sport is athletes in competition. I believe in the rules of the game and am distressed when they're not used". Another stated, "Sport is a part of a cultural outgrowth. Some college games are more interesting than pro events. Sport should be played at its best no matter what the level". Another said, "Sport is competition for its own sake. This could survive in

the pro leagues. It's stupid that the other guys are treated as enemies".

Some writers were discouraged that pro sport was becoming too much of a business. It took some of the fun out of sport. All of the sports editors, however, considered pro sport as an entertainment business. "If you look at it in any different light," stated one, "then you're fooling yourself. The European style is the ideal world because the national concept is emphasized". He also considered a philosophy of sport not to be essential for a sportswriter. One writer of high reputation in Toronto offered the most thoughtful philosophy when he said:

> Sport is a human, enjoyment and entertainment pursuit in which courage, excellence, cowardice, physical skills, laziness, enterprise and other human virtues and failings are seen under circumstances of little long-range importance.

The Ethical Standards of Sportswriting in Toronto

One of the most important qualities of a journalist is to possess integrity. The sportswriter is required to report the facts in a responsible, objective fashion. In order to do this, he must remain somewhat aloof from the sport establishment so as not to compromise his role. The following analysis probes the relationship between the writer and sport establishment and the ethical standards of sportswriters in Toronto.

The existence of sensationalism and yellow journalism (defined as an emphasis on sensational items such as "blood, money or broads) in the sports pages was questioned. Overall, 65 percent of the writers considered that yellow journalism did not exist in Toronto. However, 50 percent of the staff at the Star agreed that it did exist whereas

70 percent of the Globe and Mail's writers and 85 percent of the Sun's disagreed. The tabloid nature of the Sun lends itself to this type of reporting and the fact that the writers disagreed is surprising and might reflect some defensiveness. Later, one of the editors of the Sun admitted that the paper tends toward the sensational.

The sportswriters were asked whether the sport administrators or promoters ever tried to influence them or their papers to write favourable articles. The sportswriters considered opinion was that management of the three newspapers did not bow to any outside pressures if any did exist. One writer commented, "The promoters don't have any leverage to exert". The major sport teams apparently didn't attempt to provide any concentrated pressure, although subtle pressures existed. For example, the management from the Toronto Toros offered Christmas gifts such as portable televisions to the writers. They were not accepted. Also, the coach of the Argonauts football team stated to the writers, "You're either for us or against us". For one thing, he did not want the writers to report any of the players' injuries. It is known, however, that the writers do report the injuries since they feel they owe this to the paying customers. Another writer reflected that the owner of the Toronto Maple Leaf hockey team preferred the writers to be "housemen".

The instructions of the papers' management were to maintain an arm's length from the sport establishment. The following policies reflect the attempts to maintain this arm's length away:

a) <u>The Globe and Mail</u>

All travel, meals, hotel costs for the sportswriters are paid by the paper and not the teams. On the road, the writers attempt to travel

on separate flights from the team and when practical stay at different hotels.

Pre-game meals offered by the pro teams for sportswriters are paid by the Globe. The paper also does not allow its baseball writers to be official scorers at the Blue Jay baseball games since this would make the writer a part-time employee of the baseball establishment. Despite the fact that owners of the Globe and Mail have partial ownership of the Blue Jay baseball team, the Globe has been critical on various occasions of the management and business procedures of the Jays.

Moonlighting within sport organization is not permitted. However, it was discovered that two writers did do some writing for a publicity program of a sport they were covering. One writer was offered $200 to produce an article for a junior hockey program but turned it down. Two columnists had a regular radio and television shows but this was not considered a conflict of interest by management. One incident revealed that a Globe and Mail writer was removed from a beat. Apparently, this writer reported a hockey player drinking and being boorish on a return flight home. This caused all the players on the team not to speak to the reporter and the paper removed the writer from the beat. This same writer is now one of the paper's main Ottawa political correspondents. Removal of the writer is not a common practice of the Globe and Mail. At other times, there has been pressure from both the professional hockey and football teams to replace writers but management has supported the writers.

b) The Toronto Star

The policy is to pay for the writers' travel, meals and hotel costs. However, pre-game meals for writers at the Blue Jay games are accepted by the paper since management considers this to be part of baseball's milieu. The baseball writer at the Star is also the official scorer and is paid $35/game by the American League. Gratuities and gifts from sport promoters are not accepted.

c) The Toronto Sun

There is a general policy not to accept gifts from sport promoters. The paper says that it pays for the travel, meals and accommodations of its writers although two writers accepted free plane tickets to cover their events in golf and racing because the paper did not have the funds to support the travel to these events. The paper will also not allow its baseball writers to be official scorers.

On one occasion, the soccer writers from each of the newspapers were offered a bribe of $200, plus a lifetime pass to a burlesque show in return for giving favourable publicity for a soccer match. All three returned the money and did not accept the bribe.

With respect to the writers' relationships with the players and team management, one writer and one editor offered some pointed comments. The editor felt that generally speaking the coaches and athletes considered the media to be a "pain in the neck" or "a

necessary evil". He said that with some players there was "an element of condescension" but that this wasn't widespread. With respect to being "on-the-in", he inferred that a writer had to be very tactful. "You try to find out the key to a guy while retaining your self-respect. You don't have to pander to a coach but your job is to find out." The writer who was nominated by his peers as one of the best in the city, appeared to be a bit cynical about the media/sport establishment relationship. Other writers did not feel as strongly as he did. He commented that, "the owners treat you like children, the players like scum, the public relations man and the coach like you're their best friend."

Ninety-four percent of the writers considered that competition created by the other papers in the city was a healthy situation. "It keeps you from getting lazy", was a statement often said. Many times, however, throughout the interviews, this element of competition from other newspapers was brought up. All writers are highly sensitive about competition engendered by the other papers. When writers are "scooped", the editors are critical. When one paper's edition is off the press, it is soon in the offices of the other papers being analyzed. One writer's reaction to being beaten was, "the initial response is to try and knock down a story that has been beaten. Others try to get a fresher angle."

Why is there such a strong emphasis on beating the other paper? As one sports editor stated, it was a matter of "self-pride". One editor, sparring with the others, felt that some writers in the other papers, turned to "yellow journalism and half truths just to come up with a sensational headline." This was reiterated by one writer who felt

that "competition sometimes makes one misrepresent the facts". Another editor looked at the other papers and if there was something worthwhile, he carried it or tried to build upon the story or offer a different viewpoint. Although the competition was considered to be friendly, the papers appeared to be quite conscientious about it. Some writers considered that "the pros feed on this competition". One wondered if there was less competition whether there would be more coverage of amateur sport.

Table XX outlines what the sportswriters perceived to be their moral responsibility. One writer considered it the moral responsibility of papers to "keep a proper distance from the players and teams". Whereas, one editor felt that the papers "have a big responsibility to the young athlete", one writer stated that he was not too sure about this since newspapers were a private enterprise. One of the assistant sports editors "never thought about the question" and another said it was important to be factual because of the impact created by the "size and power of the paper". A female writer considered it a moral responsibility of the papers "to give women a fairer shake and to bring out the social ills".

In Toronto, there was no formal code of ethics established for the sportswriters. Each writer had a personal code. The writers offered no rationaleas to why or why not a code existed.

The Content of the Sports Pages

A series of questions were posed to the writers and editors to determine what method(s) were used to decide the content of the sports pages in Toronto. The writers could not offer an exact percentage

TABLE XX

Sportswriters' Perceptions of Their Moral Responsibility

RESPONSIBILITY	NO.	%
1. To be factual	15	53.6
2. To be honest	10	35.7
3. To educate	1	3.6
4. Not that much	1	3.6
5. To put sport into perspective	1	3.6

breakdown between Canadian versus American content. However, 63 percent of the writers replied that there should be no breakdown and that only newsworthy stories should be printed, while 11 percent felt that the National Football League was given too much coverage.

Twenty-eight percent of the writers felt there should be a 70/30 split between professional and amateur sport while another 28 percent felt that there should be no breakdown. Several writers stated that amateur sport was run by amateurs. One columnist thought that the only people interested in amateur sport were the participants.

However, there was a mixed reaction when writers were asked if they increased their coverage of amateur sport, would they hurt themselves by losing readers. The writers at the Globe and Mail and the Sun were split approximately 50/50 on the statement, while sixty-two percent of the Toronto Star's writers disagreed. The majority of writers (67 percent) also disagreed that attendance at athletic events should be the determining factor as to the news treatment of sports.

What system is therefore used to priorize sport reporting? The sportswriters outlined in Table XXI what they perceived the system to be. Some of the writers commented that if the sporting event was on television, then coverage probably would be in the papers. Another commented that "tradition" of the sports pages determined what would go into the paper. However, 77 percent of the writers agreed, the end result is that the sportswriters and the editors rely on their experience and instincts in trying to predict what the public wants.

Certain topics are given more emphasis than others on the sports pages. Table XXII reflects this emphasis.

TABLE XXI

System Used to Priorize Sport Coverage

SYSTEM	NO.	%
1. Experience	12	35.3
2. The editors decide	10	29.4
3. The importance of the event	6	17.6
4. Importance of the Pro game the previous night	4	11.8
5. Phone calls	2	5.9

TABLE XXII

Areas of Emphasis on the Sports Pages of Toronto

SELECTED TOPICS	STRONG EMPHASIS	AVERAGE EMPHASIS	MINOR EMPHASIS
Physical fitness for Canadians	4 (11.8%)	7 (20.6%)	*23 (67.6%)
Sportsmanship	5 (14.7%)	*17 (50.0%)	12 (35.3%)
Team play	5 (14.7%)	*19 (55.9%)	10 (29.4%)
Hero-worship	6 (17.6%)	12 (35.3%)	*16 (47.1%)
League standings	*24 (72.7%)	9 (27.3%)	0 (0)
Violence/ Aggression	*20 (60.6%)	9 (27.3%)	4 (12.1%)
Emphasis on winning	*15 (44.1%)	11 (32.4%)	8 (23.5%)
The aesthetics in sport	1 (2.9%)	*17 (50.0%)	16 (47.1%)

* reflects the most dominant response

Smith (1978) had found that if news releases were printed without the sportswriter or editor doing some form of rewrite, the public interest might not be served since generally all press releases are favourable. He had also found that most sportswriters rewrite the press releases. At the professional baseball games in Toronto, press releases were given to the press. In Appendix D, there is an example of such a release. The sportswriters covering the game only used the most important aspects of the release. Outlined are the reports on the release issued respectively by the Globe and Mail, and the Star:

Globe and Mail, May 3rd, 1977:

> "Velez was selected the Jays' player of the month for April and will be honored at a Labatt's baseball luncheon next Tuesday."

Toronto Star, May 4th, 1977:

> "Otto Velez of the Jays won the first Labatt's Player of the Month Award with 31 media votes, Doug Ault was second with 27 and Jerry Garvin third with 22. Velez gave the $250 that goes with the award to the Hart Foundation."

Should the sports pages be changed? Are there efforts made to add variety and to progress? The following responses reflect the sportswriters' views. Despite the fact that the papers might be making a profit, 94 percent of the sportswriters felt that this was no reason to stand still. Eighty-five percent of them considered it important how the sports pages were put together. However, there were various opinions as to the efforts made to add change. Table XXIII outlines the efforts attempted. Sixty-eight percent of those writers at the Globe and Mail thought their paper did a great deal to add variety while 75 percent at the Star felt that very little was being done. Although 56 percent of the writers felt that the sports pages of different

TABLE XXIII

Efforts to Add Change to the Sports Pages

EFFORTS	NO.	%
1. A great deal	16	48.5
2. Very little	11	33.3
3. Changes are cosmetic	5	15.2
4. There's an attempt to have lighter content	1	3.0

newspapers approached their reporting differently, approximately one-third considered the papers wrote about the same topics, with approximately the same amount of space, using the same style, and so forth.

The Globe and Mail, in an attempt to bring a female point of view to sports and to get more coverage for females, hired a female columnist. It also added two columns per paper. It ran a regular fitness column and attempted to delve more into the business aspect of sport.

The Toronto Sun' goal was to write short, concise articles. They tried different layouts. One of the editors admitted, "You're probaly right. We tend toward the sensational. A tabloid tends to sensationalize."

The Toronto Star writers admitted little was done to add variety. One editor said, "... we can't vary content" while the other stated there wasn't enough variety and stated that there was so much mandatory space that it wasn't easy to add variety articles.

The writers were also asked if they considered the sports pages to be actually unpaid-for advertising. The majority (53 percent) agreed with this.

Finally, the writers were asked for their opinions as to how sportswriting in Toronto could be improved. The following suggestions were presented:

Globe and Mail

- "There should be less emphasis on the Blue Jays and more on amateur sport."
- "We should have shorter stories."
- "There should be less emphasis on matching a story that's been scooped."

- "Do not put people into beats too early. We either go overboard or don't do enough."
- "Bring in new blood at the organizational level."
- "Interchange sportswriters with general writers."
- "Let the sportswriter work under a news editor."
- "Be less traditional."
- "Have better writers."
- "Writers tend to glorify athletes too much then come down hard on them."

The Toronto Star

- "Have professional development days."
- "Have specialists like the European writers."
- "Give more direction to young writers."
- "There should be more experimentation."
- "Hire better writers."
- "Have more investigative writing."

The Toronto Sun

- "Have a less traditional staff."
- "Hire better writers."
- "Place more amateur emphasis."
- "Have less outside editors' influence."

The sportswriters were quite serious in making these suggestions and sincerely felt that if the recommendations were enacted, sports-writing in Toronto could be improved.

DISCUSSION

A General Description of the Sportswriters in Toronto

In an ideal situation, regardless of the profession, management seeks to hire people who possess the highest qualifications. It is very rare, however, that individuals of this type come along and, in most instances, management must compromise and hire the best of what is available. This is also true in the hiring of sportswriters.

One of the editors interviewed somewhat facetiously stated that his ideal sportswriter would be "a person who had a degree in business administration, a strong emphasis on contractual law, two years as a show business critic and could write". However, he realized that he would have to settle for the best person possible.

The fact that the papers in Toronto hired 80 percent of the writers who had some form of advanced education (the majority of whom had practical writing and work experience) and the fact that papers were not hiring people just because they had been former athletes, are not indicative of "recruitment at its lowest levels", or the possession of "intellectual poverty" (Shecter, 1970). It may still be argued whether the best people are being hired but it is difficult to state the opposite. Also, while it may be debatable whether sportswriters are the equal to newswriters (sportswriters may in fact be better journalists than the newswriters), they are equals in regard to salary. This may be indicative that the industry itself considers them to be equal journalists although, as shall be seen later, there

are less demands by sports editors on sportswriters as there are by the editors in other departments.

Gelfand (1969) stated that it was important for writers to have thought about and taken a stand on issues that affected the social environment of sport, such as, violence, emphasis on winning, sportsmanship and the emphasis on the star athlete. However, it was not strongly apparent in discussion with the sports editors or the writers in Toronto that this was important. Some may say that Gelfand takes too academic an approach to the situation. This may be true since he teaches at a university in the United States. However, he is a former sportswriter and sports editor himself and somehow has come to believe that sportswriters should do more analytical thinking about their jobs. One of the more experienced sportswriters in Toronto selected by his peers as being one of the best in the city, might have attested to this omission of a well-thought-out approach to the job when he stated, "You know I've been writing sports in this city for 13 years and I've never thought about a lot of these questions you're asking." At times, academics irritate people in the "real" world because they do not live under the daily pressures experienced by business people, particularly newspaper people who, because of constant deadlines, may not be able to conduct their activities in the ideal way. However, Gelfand has lived in the real world and his opinions are worthy of serious consideration. Also as evidenced in the Unesco conference on "Mass Media in a Violent World" (Burnet, 1971), when academics and journalists are brought together the lively discussion usually produces positive recommendations.

If length of service is indicative of sound hiring procedures,

the one paper in Toronto, the Star, has sound procedures. The paper has a low turnover rate. Apparently, there is a good working relationship between the writers, they are approximately the same age and all are being paid over $20,000.00 per year. They are also able to buy shares in the paper and they have an open well-lit working area to write in. Prior to being hired, all of the writers had extensive field and writing experience and the majority had either a diploma in journalism or a university degree.

On the other hand, the Globe and Mail had a reasonably high turnover rate. During the term of this study, three of the writers who were hired, having less than four years previous working experience in sport, left the business. They had worked at the Globe for a three-year time period. One left because of poor direction from management and another ultimately resigned because of a lack of experience with the sport milieu. In the hiring stage, the management of this paper looked for people who could write. Their attitude was if people could write, then they could write sport. Therefore, there might be some significance to the point that people leave sportswriting due to a lack of previous writing experience in sport. Whether this is good or bad for sportswriting is questionable since on the one hand there is instability and inexperience in staffing, yet on the other hand, fresh ideas and new approaches are brought into the department.

The Sportswriters' Perceptions of Media Impact

Berelson (1972) had considered that the media tended to influence the public's thinking on peripheral issues rather than those developed upon long standing opinions and attitudes, to a degree, we

see this evident in the sports pages in Toronto. There is a strong tradition in the city for following the Toronto Argonauts football team. Almost a familial relationship has developed between the club and the city. Despite the many losses and criticism from the press, attendance at the games has not been appreciably lowered. The fans continue to support "their" Argos. On the other hand, the Toronto Toros was a new hockey club to the city. The fact that the people of Toronto did not have a long time to become accustomed to the team plus the perception that the team participated in an inferior league, did not increase attendance despite the coverage given by the press. This qualifies Péladeau's (1970) statement that coverage increases attendance. It is obvious that other factors must be considered.

The in-depth articles that were written on agent abuse and the squandering of N.H.L. funds assisted in bringing about change. The semblance of a social responsibility in the sports pages was evident here helping negate the strong criticism of Edwards (1969) and Beddoes (1970) and supporting Shaw's (1975) contentions that the sports pages were changing and taking a more responsible position.

Francis (1967) and Andelman (1974) maintained that the writers could have an impact, unknown to the public, by not reporting certain issues or facts. It is an ethical question whether to reveal personal characteristics of an athlete to the public but in the instance of the Toronto Maple Leaf hockey player, the public was not given the complete picture and consequently, a different image of the athlete was portrayed.

A significant percentage of the writers (72 percent) considered that the sports pages in Toronto assisted in fostering the violence that existed in sport. The printing of stories and the use of photos promoted

rather than criticized the violence. The editors invariably stated that the pictures of hockey fights were placed in the papers because they were either "good action shots" or "artistic". However, it is difficult to believe that with the sophisticated camera equipment and talented photographers that exist in Toronto that more positive and healthy action and artistic shots could not be taken. In all probability, the real reasons why these pictures are used are, as Geen (1977) suggests, they are functional and provide variety or some vicarous enjoyment to the reader. If the assessment of 72 percent of the writers is to be accepted, then the management of the three Toronto newspapers must make a decision whether or not they are going to continue fostering sport violence by the manner of the reporting that is presently being used.

Some writers stated that the manner in which violence in hockey was being criticized was very hypocritical. At one time, the writers reported the fighting in a light manner, but because of the European influence, they were now very critical. However, if writers and their editors had previously taken a stand on violence as Gelfand (1969) had suggested, then the 'flip flop' might not have occurred and the so-called journalism profession could have "educated" the public about violence in sport.

Im summary, the writers' perceptions are that the sports pages have an impact on the public. The degree of impact is difficult to determine and is probably dependent upon several variables such as the educational and social background of the readers (Defleur and Rokeach, 1975).

The Role and Function of the Sportswriter

Throughout the discussion with the sportswriters, it appeared that they were trying to be very candid about their job and their role. At times, there was some bias showing. For example, remarks like, "our paper doesn't try to be sensational but the others do", occurred but on the whole a broad perspective was taken.

This was evidenced when a reasonable proportion, however not a majority of the writers, particularly those with a university education, were critical of themselves as a group. One can only speculate as to why the writers with a university education were more critical than the others. Perhaps, the nature of a university education itself generally fosters a more reflective and analytical approach. These individuals saw that sportswriting could be more than what it was if people with more news responsibility were in the job and if there was more social commentary. Those writers with a diploma in journalism who had been trained to be news people were generally opposed to the criticism suggested in the literature on the sportswriters' lack of responsibility and lack of social commentary which could reflect a degree of defensiveness on their part.

The sportswriters, while supportive of the newspaper's role to inform the public about sport, were not totally supportive of their role to educate and influence the public about sport. These responses to their educational and influential role once again do not indicate the majority of the sportswriters in Toronto feel they have a social responsibility function to play. It was noteworthy to see that two-thirds of the writers felt the newspaper's role was to reflect the public's

attitude about sport. However, no formal questionnaires or surveys are conducted on a regular basis to measure the public's attitude.

The respondents were generally conscientious about sportswriters having the quality of integrity. McFarlane (1955), Andelman (1974) and Cosell (1974) had criticized the integrity of the writers for compromising their objectivity with the sport establishment. The fact that many sportswriters are concerned about this and the steps that have been taken to assist maintenance of this integrity, such as paying their own way, are positive signs toward fulfilling their journalistic responsibilities.

Ghose (1974) had stated that an interest in sport was an important quality for a sportswriter while McGonagle (1975) mentioned that a humourous, light writing approach was important. The sportswriters' second strongest dislike of sportswriting concerned those writers who did not show this interest in sport and who took everything too seriously. These statements have implications for hiring personnel to the sports department, not only for having good sportswriters but also for having a happy staff.

Having a sound knowledge of sport was not listed as one of the qualities required to be a successful sportswriter. No one would disagree that a knowledge of sport is important. The questionable point would be the degree of knowledge required. Columnists' positions are not given to inexperienced, unknowledgeable sportswriters. When they are, the columnist is out of his/her league as many writers felt one young columnist was who after being given the job with little sport knowledge soon left the position. Many of the writers would say that the knowledge of a particular sport could be learned on the job. However,

responsible reporting would dictate a thorough knowledge of the subject area and even an empathy with the major actors. To acquire this empathy one erstwhile sport journalist, George Plimpton, has launched himself into the professional sport environment and assumed the role of athletes in different sports. It would appear to be a very unnatural, irresponsible role of a sportswriter, in fact any writer, to stand back and act as an all-knowing critic without having an empathy for the pressures and problems a participant has to go through, especially when "the media never give anything back to society in precisely the form in which it occurred (Burnet, 1971:9). To do so fails to portray or reflect reality which the reporter is responsible for doing. At the least, his criticism should be tempered to reflect the human condition.

Pulitzer (1904) maintained that writers should not just report facts but should put these into context and offer opinions. Both the writers and editors generally agreed with this. However, again responsible reporting would dictate that the writer offer an opinion provided it was an informed opinion which can only be acquired through learning, experience or a combination of the two.

The sportswriters had stated that at time stories were written that did not report both sides of a story. Although sportswriters are reprimanded by editors if this is done, it is rare that someone if fired.

Shecter (1970) implied that there was a strong need for the writers to be closely associated with the athletes while Francis (1967) had stated that this infatuation soon disappeared. While the writers enjoyed being associated with well-known people, they soon realized that the athletes were only people and like all people, there were some

good ones and some bad ones. However, some questionable characters are held up to be heroes which tends not to reflect reality.

With the vast scope of sport today, it would seem that the only thing holding back the innovative ways of reporting sport is a lack of imagination, daring and foresight. But because this innovation is not present to a large extent in Toronto, there exists the "boredom", the "repetitive nature of things" and the "lack of variety" which is causing some writers to leave the business. The word "some" must be emphasized for as shall be seen, the Toronto Star admits that it adds little variety, yet the turnover in staff is low. Obviously, other benefits keep the writers at the Star.

Finally, the majority of the writers felt that they could improve their work if they had the opportunity to discuss common issues and acquire new ideas, approaches and technique. For example, one topic worthy of discussion would be: "Who should be the targets of criticism?". The sportswriters had various opinions. However, none of the three newspapers provided this opportunity for discussion and after speaking with the editors, they were not fully aware of the need.

The Writer's Personal Views of Sport

The majority of writers did not have a deeply considered personal philosophy of sport. Their total concept of sport as it applied to the professional level was that it was entertainment. The social values of sport and the place of sport in society, were not part of the writers' philosophies as these pertained to professional sport.

One editor stated that sportswriters did not require a philosophy of sport. Other than Gelfand (1969), none of the literature listed

having a philosophy of sport as a requirement to be a sportswriter. However, it seems reasonable to suggest that a writer's perceptions of sport will affect his interpretation of sporting events no matter how objective he/she tries to be.

Professional sport is generally held up as a role model for amateurs to follow because in most circles of society, professional sport represents the best. But the writers in Toronto, in comparing pro sport to entertainment, seem to downplay this leadership role of the professionals.

This philosophical approach to the job appears shallow in light of the social and cultural significance of sport in society. Possibly, it is one of the reasons why the writers seek to emphasize and highlight the star performance or the hero rather than the team concept because this is what the drama or movie critic does.

The one sportswriter who had expressed quite a meaningful philosophy toward sport stated that many qualities were seen "under circumstances of little long-range importance". The events, in themselves and as they relate to the fans, in all probability "have little long-range importance". In fact, they are often soon forgotten. However, it is questionable whether the many athletes who compete in sport from the amateur to pro level, sometimes under very demanding situations, would consider their experiences to have little long-range personal importance. In many instances, and I am sure the sportswriters would agree, the memories and achievements have a great deal of long lasting meaning.

The Ethical Standards of Sportswriting in Toronto

Shecter (1970) stated that the writers failed to criticize athletes because they had to live with them every day. McFarlane (1955) and Cosell (1974) claimed that gratuities and gifts were accepted from people the writers were to objectively analyze. However, the procedures that the papers have implemented, some more stringent than others, is a positive step forward in maintaining their objectivity and ultimately their integrity.

The papers appear to be on strong financial ground and are therefore in a good position to maintain their viewpoints. However, in speaking to the writers and sports editors, pressure to write certain articles or to give more exposure to certain events does not come from outside influences but more from internal influences, namely upper management of the paper. In one paper, upper management consisted of baseball fans who wanted the baseball team to be given more coverage. In another, the managing editor controlled the sports department.

Since the athletes and sport management consider the sportswriter to be a "necessary evil" or a "pain in the neck", it appears that it would take time for the sportswriter to develop a rapport with, or win the confidence of these individuals. Any sportswriter starting the job should not expect to be immediately respected by the sport establishment.

There have been many complaints about baseball writers serving as chief scorers at baseball events. The complaint: "How can these writers serve two masters?". Two of the three Toronto papers will not allow their writers to act in this role. The other cannot see any wrong

in this. This would seem to be a conflict of interest and the paper's sincerity in maintaining an arm's length relationship is thus questionable. Even though the management of the papers is trying to keep an arm's length away, this is no guarantee that all writers are following the practice. As noted, some writers have written articles in programs and others have accepted special trips. This confirms that social roles, norms, goals and the reward and punishment system in the organization may set conditions and consequences of action but they do not necessarily determine action.

Edwards' (1969) statement that neither the writer nor the editor likes to be "beaten" on a story is very evident in Toronto. There appears to be fear for being beaten on a story. Even though the writers felt that competition was healthy, some admitted that it was the cause for some writers writing a story without all the facts or not getting both sides of a story. One writer had felt that the pros fed on the competition between the papers and that it was possibly one of the reasons why the papers did not want to gamble and add more variety and perhaps even give the amateurs more coverage. It is ironic that the large majority of writers and editors in Toronto felt that sport should not be taken too seriously, yet they take the competition so seriously. It is even more ironic since the public is not directly concerned.

Greenwood (1957) also stated that one of the aspects of a job being classified as a profession, was the establishment and existence of a formal code of ethics. Sportswriters in Toronto do not abide by any official code of ethics other than their own papers' policies and the laws relating to libel and defamation.

The Content of the Sports Pages

Another criticism leveled at sportswriters was their poor quality of writing. Shecter (1970) stated that a great deal of the writing was "bland", "cliché ridden" and MacDougall (1972) said it was "gibberish". However, Red Smith (1976) countered that with the descriptive liberty allowed in sportswriting, some of the best writing on any given day could be found in the sports pages. The writers themselves admitted that the writing could be enhanced. In their recommendations as to how the sports pages could be improved, writers from each of the staffs suggested that better writers be hired. One sports editor admitted that his paper had the poorest writers in the city and that even his writing style was not the best. Another paper, in its hiring procedures for the sportswriting staff, seemed to be looking strictly for good writers, with the rationale that if they had good writers, they could develop their skills so they would be good sportswriters. The paper seemed to be going to the opposite end of the continuum, neglecting some of the other important qualities necessary to be a good sportswriter, as noted earlier.

However, the question arises why would good writers be attracted to write in the sports departments rather than in other departments of the newspapers? Apparently, more liberal opportunities for freedom of expression plus less interference by the editors in the written copy are motivational factors. It appears though that with this lessened interference by the sports editors, the sports departments are working at cross purposes. On the one hand, the editors want good writing to occur, yet on the other, they are not as demanding as editors in other

departments. Either it is true that it matters little how the sports pages are put together or incompetent sports editors are tolerated by the papers, which only reinforces the first point.

The writers appeared to take pride in their work. Although they admitted that sportswriting could be improved, they disagreed that it was devoid of any merit since there were many good sportswriters in Toronto. Fisher, a noted political columnist, placed the writing of sport in perspective when he said:

> I would say that the level of sports journalism, particularly in the larger newspaper, is comparable to the level of political journalism. Neither one is consistently excellent but it is fair (1969:30).

With respect to the actual stories that are reported, there is no calculated procedure used to determine what is covered. In the end, the editors decide and their decisions are ultimately based upon the traditional coverage of sport (Smith, 1976). As Smith (1976) had also discovered the writers hesitated to attach a percentage to the breakdown between professional versus amateur and Canadian versus American coverage as they felt that the most newsworthy story should be given coverage. Many writers, though believing that amateur sport should be given more coverage, criticized the organization of amateur sport specifically in its communications methods with the media. At the time of this study, the writers were attempting to acquire information on Canadian athletes participating in the 1978 Commonwealth Games in Edmonton and were frustrated with the lack of information available from the national offices in Ottawa. This confirmed much of what Goodwin (1971), Levitt (1971) and Raymond (1971) supported on the interest of the media to cover more amateur sport but the frustration in attempting to get the information.

It was also interesting to note the topics that were given priority in the Toronto papers. League standings, violence and the emphasis on winning were given strong emphasis. Two items, which concerned the 'values' in sport, namely team play and sportsmanship, were given average emphasis. This is also ironic because in team sports, these two qualities or values are essential to the sport and the sport culture. Why they are not given stronger emphasis might be indicative that all three newspapers are somewhat guilty of emphasizing the sensational.

There was diverse opinion as to the attempts made to add variety to the sports pages in Toronto. One paper had problems with space. It would be ideal if the sports departments had the space required to add everything that could be covered but since all the space is not available, possibly consideration could be given to curtailing standings and box scores and giving less coverage to the pros which many writers have classified as "unpaid advertising". The findings of this study indicate that the Toronto Sun leans toward the sensational, particularly, in headings. Even though it has some of the best writers in the city, the Star is the most traditional and conservative paper and admits it adds little variety, while the Globe and Mail is the most experimental, innovative and offers the most in-depth reporting especially since it has a large staff that has the time to research stories.

The writers themselves gave some positive suggestions as to improving sportswriting in Toronto. These are self-explanatory, but they emphasize two points: the sports pages could be less traditional, and better writers could be hired or trained.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to provide an occupational analysis of the sportswriter. The city of Toronto, Canada, was chosen as the site for the study because it's one of the few locations where there are three thriving newspapers. Each paper features a large sports staff and all papers cover both professional and amateur sport. Observation technique and in-depth interviews were used in the data gathering phase. Sportswriters were observed in the field and in their office. Interviews were conducted with 35 of the sportswriters using a questionnaire designed specifically for this project. The questionnaire explored six major facets of the sportswriter's job, namely:

a) A general description of the sportswriter;

b) The sportswriters' perceptions of media impact;

c) The role and function of the sportswriter;

d) The writer's personal views of sport;

e) The ethical standards of sportswriting in Toronto;

f) The content of the sports pages.

Conclusions

When the one sportswriter, selected by his peers as being one of the best in the city, stated that during 13 years of sportswriting he had not considered many of the questions presented to him, this

reaction seemed to testify to the value of a study of this nature. Because of their obsession with being beaten by other papers and the lack of opportunities for professional development or group think sessions, the sportswriters do not take the time to reflect on their jobs or to experiment with new ideas. As a result of this dilemma, traditional approaches to sportswriting are perpetuated, with professional sport receiving extensive coverage, pictures of fights being displayed, the hero being emphasized, and so forth.

The results indicate that the average sportswriter in Toronto has a post secondary school education; makes over $20,000 per year; believes that the media influence the public; maintains that his function is to inform, entertain and reflect; has an undeveloped philosophy of sport; follows only a personal code of ethics; has average writing ability; is looking for leadership from his superiors and, believes that the content of the sports pages has not changed significantly over the years.

Contrary to what McFarlane (1955), Edwards (1969), Cosell (1974), Shecter (1970) and others maintain, the sportswriters are not "hucksters". Through the policies of their newspapers, they are attempting to maintain an arm's length relationship with the sport establishment in order to protect their objectivity and integrity.

As a group, they realize that their writing could be improved, but it is not as undisciplined as some of the literature implies. They agree that it does not require a former athlete to be a good sportswriter, but they maintain that an interest in sport is essential. The respondents also claimed that having a well-rounded educational background was important but that practical experience and writing ability

were more important.

Many of the writers agreed with Edwards' (1969) assessment that sportswriters do not possess a social conscience in that they do not adequately reflect many of the social issues of sport today. One of the major reasons for this is the writers and their newspapers have not previously thought about and decided upon many of the important issues of sport. They further agreed that professional sport is given a great deal of coverage and that amateur sport is not organized in keeping the media up-to-date on what is occurring.

Although there are sportswriters in Toronto who are 'professional' and exhibit journalistic professionality, as a result of the findings the field of sportswriting cannot be formally classified as a profession. Although there is a special form of training to be a journalist, it is not required that everyone go through this training and there is no widely accepted formal training to become a sportswriter. There is also no formal service ideal to which the sportswriters can dedicate themselves, no established code of ethics and no professional organization, other than in name only, that promotes the autonomy of both the organization and its individual members.

Implications

The major goal of the newspaper industry, as of any industry, is to survive. Survival means making a profit. The secondary goal is for the industry to grow and expand, which in turn, increases profit. The cycle perpetuates itself. Survival and growth, however, are rudimentary goals. If an industry is to survive over the long term, it must look for other goals. One of these is to have a concern for the

environment in which the industry exists, to be community oriented and responsible.

The sports pages in Canada are assisting the newspaper industry to make a profit in Toronto. These pages are also growing in terms of audience appeal, now being the third most read section of the newspaper. It appears from this study that the sports pages in Toronto have also begun to look toward other goals. They are maintaining a respectable distance from the sport establishment and displaying a social conscience, such as exposing agent abuses of athletes. The sports pages in Toronto now have the potential and power to develop into being more responsible and imaginative if they can be organized properly. They have the opportunity to bring a Canadian way to sport reporting which has long been influenced by the American media.

The manner in which sport is reported can contribute to the social environment in which sport is played. For example, if violence is condoned, there is the possibility that the practice of violence can be reinforced. Many of the sportswriters stated that the function of the sportswriter was to "put things into perspective". Looking at the broader context, this means putting sport into perspective which can only be done by supplying answers to the following basic questions: How does sport fit into our environment? How should sport be played? What is the meaning of sport? It means that the emphasis of reporting be shifted from considering a sporting event as an isolated incident to looking at it in the context of the common goals of sport and a healthy sport environment. The manner or process in which sport acitivity is reported in Canada is very important to Canadian society. Whether in sport, politics or business, when dealing in human affairs, process of

action is just as important if not more important than product or results of action.

If the sports departments in Toronto decide to strive for loftier goals to improve, it is evident that better leadership and planning is required at all three newspapers. In the management of any sound organization, objectives are established and evaluated and the employees are given regular opportunities with senior management to review these objectives and their own personal performance. The employees are also given an opportunity to grow in their jobs by periodically taking courses or seminars, funded by management, to expand their horizons and acquire new ideas. Despite the fact that the majority of sportswriters in Toronto have considerable experience, they require leadership and regular opportunities to talk about common concerns. If changes are not made in management's style, sportswriting in Toronto will remain static.

Recommendations

The following are a number of recommendations offered toward the advancement of sportswriting in Toronto. Most of these suggestions have been made by the sportswriters themselves:

1. Establishment of well-defined positions on important issues in sport such as: violence, winning, sportsmanship, team play, drugs, amateur versus professional, and so forth. These positions would not only form a focal point for the writers to base their reporting, but would also help to avoid the flip-flop positions being taken by the press on these issues.
2. Restructuring of its professional organization that

could develop, if not professional development days, then resource material that would assist the writers in improving their craft. A regular newsletter would be helpful even if it was composed of a series of photo-copied articles pertinent to journalism.

3. Improved leadership by the sports editors in co-ordinating periodic discussion periods where common concerns could be broached and in demanding and assisting the writing of better articles.
4. Inviting of guest speakers from various field of sport to talk to the writers (e.g. sport sociologists, coaches, officials, national leaders of amateur sport, proven writers, specialists on media impact).
5. The discreet use of pictures on fighting which, if over used, are negative, unimaginative and do little to promote a healthy sport environment. If fighting pictures are used, possibly headings or descriptions could also be used to discredit the action.
6. Establishment of more sophisticated and regular procedures for surveying reader interest and for evaluating the effectiveness of the sports pages with the readers. A contest could be run with the readers asking for different ideas to improve the sports pages. For example, there might be some merit in having rotating cub reporters who report on kid sports along the lines of the television program: "Kids Are People Too".
7. Periodic assignment of sportswriters to other departments

to provide variety and an opportunity to work and learn from other editors.

8. Surveying of the athletes, coaches, and sports management to understand what they consider to be responsible reporting. For example, many athletes on team sports might not consider it responsible to emphasize the individual or to only go to the 'star's' cubicle after a team event.

9. Hiring of more people who have a well-rounded educational background, writing ability, and an interest and strong knowledge of sport and its value. For example, there are many physical education graduates who wish to write sports. Possibly, a sportswriting stream might be developed within a physical education program at a university or community college where apprenticeship experience in sportswriting could be given. This would allow physical educators who "rail and bleat among themselves about how poorly sport is covered in the mass media" (Smith and Blackman, 1978:79) to actively participate in affecting change.

10. Establishment of a code of ethics and service ideal. The code would have to be based upon what the sportswriter does, therefore, a detailed task analysis of the sportswriter's role would have to be done first. A person skilled in problem-solving and task analysis could be contracted to work with a selected group of writers, possibly some of the best ones as noted earlier,

to develop a draft code to be later reviewed and accepted by the sportswriters at large. Development and adherence to a code of ethics will not only give common positive direction to all writers but will also certainly add to the professional status of the job.

11. Taking a healthier approach to competition. Realizing that competition is a fact of life, if there is a preoccupation with it, it can have its negative effects. It appears that the sports pages in Toronto are being led more by the competition than by sound, well-thought out principles and approaches.

12. Since space at the papers is at a premium, in order to give wide coverage of sporting events, some acceptable modifications to the box and line scores might free up more space.

13. Future studies conducted on sportswriting might consider the following:

    a) A detailed content analysis of the sports pages to determine what is being reported. Possible areas for examination would be: the relationship between professional and amateur coverage; Canadian versus American coverage; the types of sports given coverage; the number and types of articles that present a sociological perspective.

    b) A more in-depth participant observation study might be done where the researcher becomes an active member of a sports staff (e.g. assistant beat reporter) for a

six to twelve month time period. A more penetrating analysis could then be done.

c) A comparison between sportswriters and newswriters would shed more conclusive evidence of the professional status of each area.

d) Athletes, coaches and sport management in Toronto could be interviewed to determine their perceptions of sportswriting in Toronto.

e) The strength of a society is to have its people motivated by common principles and goals. Similarly, the strength of sport is to have all its participants (e.g. athletes, coaches, sportswriters, fans, sports administrators, officials) participating according to common principles and goals. A major study could be conducted on a representative sample of all participants in sport to determine how close they are to having any common approaches.

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APPENDIX A

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter of Introduction Forwarded to the Sports Editors
of the Three Toronto Newspapers

Dear :

I am a Physical Education graduate student at the University of Alberta working toward my M.A. degree. As part of that degree, it is a requirement to complete a thesis. The topic I would like to write on is "An Occupational Analysis of the Sportswriter".

It is my opinion that sportswriters have an important role to play in sport, but little is known about them. I would appreciate the opportunity to be able to conduct my study with the staff of your newspaper as well as the sport staffs of the other two Toronto newspapers. What would be involved would be interviewing the sports-writers and, on occasion, observing them both in the office and on the job.

Next week, I shall contact you by telephone to explain in more detail the aspects of the project and to seek your permission to conduct the study with your newspaper.

Yours Sincerely,

Terry Valeriote

APPENDIX B

SPORTSWRITERS AND EDITORS IN TORONTO

WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS STUDY

GLOBE AND MAIL

Al Abel
Dick Beddoes
Christie Blatchford
Neil Campbell
Jim Christie
Clark Davey
Jim Golla
Jeff Goodman
Al Halberstadt
Jeff Labow
Nora McCabe
Larry Millson
Paul Patton
Dick Proctor
Don Ramsey
Jim Vipond
Ed Waring
Scott Young

THE STAR

Len Coates
Arlie Keller
Jim Kernaghan
Rick Matsumoto
Ken McKee
Rex McLeod
Frank Orr
Jim Proudfoot
Al Ryan
Al Sokol

THE SUN

Kaye Corbett
Rick Fraser
Trent Frayne
George Gross
Pat Hickey
Bruce O'Neill
Paul Polango

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

A.

1. Name of Employer: _____
2. Size of sport staff: _____
3. Age: _____
4. Highest level of education background: _____
5. Number of years in newspaper sportswriting: _____
6. Previous work experience prior to being hired by this newspaper:

   (Start from last job)

   i) Name of employer: _____

   ii) Description of job:

   _____

   _____

   i) Name of employer _____

   ii) Description of job:

   _____

   _____
7. Past athletic experience:
8. How and why did you initially get involved in sportswriting?
9. What qualifications did you require to be hired by this newspapers?
10. How, in your opinion, should a person prepare him/herself for a career in sportswriting in Toronto?

B. The following is a series of statements made by individuals on the media and sportswriters. Could you circle the number which best expresses the way things are today in Toronto.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

11. Sports are games. Don't take them seriously (Shecter, 1970:78).

(5 4 3 2 1)

12. Sports could be more fun for the spectator if players concentrated just on the skills of the game.

(5 4 3 2 1)

13. ... the miles and miles of space devoted annually to the sports news in the nation's newspapers is actually unpaid-for advertising (MacDougall, 1972:469).

(5 4 3 2 1)

14. Many editors are addicted to the insistence of yellow journalism or 'blood, money or broads' (Casty, 1968:211).

(5 4 3 2 1)

15. Sports departments are crammed more with sport buffs, not newspapermen (Shecter, 1970:45).

(5 4 3 2 1)

16. If he increases his coverage of amateur sport, he hurts himself by losing readers (Smith, 1972:21).

(5 4 3 2 1)

17. News treatment of sports should be governed by attendance records at athletic events (MacDougall, 1941:123).

(5 4 3 2 1)

18. ... many sport journalists are simply insensitive to the magnitude and impact of the social problems that are festering beneath their noses (Edwards, 1969:32).

(5 4 3 2 1)

19. Sportswriting is hero-worshipful (Shecter, 1970:21).

(5 4 3 2 1)

20. The end result is that sport journalists rely on their experience and instincts in trying to predict what the public wants (Smith, 1972:20).

(5 4 3 2 1)

21. There is no reason to change sport journalism because everyone is making a profit and that is all that counts (Smith, 1972:39).

(5 4 3 2 1)

22. It had long been recognized that, in the newspaper industry, since the sports section has little influence on our lives and times, it matters little how it is put together (Shecter, 1970:14).

(5 4 3 2 1)

23. Studies have shown that sports departments appear to be all the same. They write about the same topics, with approximately the same amount of space, using the same style, etc.

(5 4 3 2 1)

24. Violence exists in hockey today.

(5 4 3 2 1)

C. How much emphasis does your newspaper sports department allow the following subjects?

	Strong Emphasis	Average Emphasis	Minor Emphasis
25.	Physical fitness for Canadians		
26.	Sportsmanship		
27.	Team play		
28.	Hero-worship		
29.	League standings		
30.	Violence/Aggression		
31.	Emphasis on Winning		
32.	The aesthetics in sport		

What do you feel is the purpose or goal of the Canadian newspaper sports page?

33. To educate people about sport (5 4 3 2 1)

34. To inform people about sport (5 4 3 2 1)

35. To influence the public's attitude about sport (5 4 3 2 1)

36. To reflect the public's attitude about sport (5 4 3 2 1)

37. To reinforce the public's attitude about sport (5 4 3 2 1)

38. To sell sport to the public for the promoter (5 4 3 2 1)

39. To sell newspapers (5 4 3 2 1)

D. Questionnaire

40. What is the function of a sportswriter?

41. What are the qualities of a good sportswriter? Who are some good ones in Toronto?

42. What are the rewards and satisfactions for being a sportswriter?

43. What do you dislike about sportswriting?

44. Why do some sportswriters leave the business?

45. What system is used to priorize sport reporting on a daily basis?

46. What should be the percentage breakdown with regard to the American versus Canadian content in the sports pages of Canadian newspaper?

47. What should be the percentage breakdown with regard to the professional and amateur content in the sports pages of Canadian newspaper?

48. Sportswriting in Toronto is a business. Does the business aspect (i.e. making money) affect responsible reporting?

49. How does the element of competition from two other major newspapers affect sport reporting in Toronto?

50. What pressures do you experience in your sport reporting in Toronto (i.e. daily deadlines; promotion; athletes; content)? Have you ever received any threats?

51. What effort is made to add variety or change to the sports pages in Toronto?

52. Generally, what is your definition of violence?

53. Does violence exist in sport today? If yes, does the sport media in any way foster this violence (i.e. pictures)?

54. Is it your responsibility to simply report the facts, or should you offer your own opinion based on your philosophy and beliefs in sport?

55. What right do Toronto sportswriters have to criticize athletes or management?

56. If you do criticize, should the athlete or management be given equal space in the paper for reply or rebuttal?

57. Toronto sports pages seem to present one side of an issue and not the pros and cons at the same time (i.e. degrading an athlete's performance). Why is this so?

58. What moral responsibility do you feel sportswriters and sports departments have?

59. Do sportswriters in Toronto have a code of ethics? If yes, why? If no, why not?

60. Are there any standards of reporting that you as a sportswriter for this newspaper are expected to meet?

61. Have you ever been reprimanded by management for articles you have written? If yes, why?

62. Do you have any professional development days?

63. What assistance or leadership do you, or would you like to receive, from the editor of this newspaper?

64. Could you briefly describe your philosophy of sport?

65. How do you feel sportswriting in Toronto could be improved?

66. Is there a 'team approach' taken by your sports staff?

67. Salary: $10-15,000 $16-20,000 over $20,000

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE
TORONTO BLUE JAYS

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT • BOX 7777 • ADELAIDE STREET POST OFFICE
TORONTO • ONTARIO • CANADA M5C 2K7 PHONE (416) 595-0077

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE * TORONTO, MAY 3, 1977

VELEZ WINS FIRST LABATT'S PLAYER OF THE MONTH AWARD

Hard-hitting OTTO VELEZ has captured the first of six monthly Labatt's Most Valuable Player Awards. The six-foot, 195-pound outfielder tore his way through American League pitching for the month of April at a .442 clip, good enough to lead the major leagues as well as capture the first Labatt's trophy.

DOUG AULT finished second to Velez in the balloting, which is conducted after every Blue Jays game, home and away, by a panel of accredited sports personalities. Ault, who hit .329 in the first month of the season, was tied with Velez in homers -- five -- and just one behind him in RBIs with 17.

Velez and Ault, who lead the Blue Jays in nearly every offensive department, will be honoured at a luncheon to be held at the Seaway Towers Hotel, 2000 Lake Shore Boulevard West, on May 10th at 12 noon. Tickets are available from the Seaway Towers (Phone 763-4521) and from the Seaway Beverly Hills, 1677 Wilson Avenue (Phone 249-8171) for $4.50 per person.

Velez will receive the monthly winner's trophy and a cheque for $250. In addition, another cheque for $250 will go to his favourite charity.

Twenty players were named in the balloting, and Velez was named in the voting eight different times, just one more than runner-up Ault. Third place was shared by rookie left-hander Jerry Garvin, who won four games without a loss in five starts, and by shortstop-outfielder Bob Bailor. The 25 year-old hit safely in all but two of the 18 games in which he played and ended the month with a .319 average and tied for club lead in runs scored with 13.

The results of the April balloting:

1. Otto Velez	31 pts.	T9. Jesse Jefferson	6 pts.
2. Doug Ault	27 pts.	T12. Pete Vuckovich	5 pts.
T3. Jerry Garvin	22 pts.	T12. Mike Willis	5 pts.
T3. Bob Bailor	22 pts.	14. Alan Ashby	4 pts.
5. Dave Lemanczyk	12 pts.	15. Jim Mason	3 pts.
6. Chuck Hartenstein	9 pts.	16. Bill Singer	2 pts.
T7. Dave McKay	7 pts.	T17. Sam Ewing	1 pt.
T7. Al Woods	7 pts.	T17. Ron Fairly	1 pt.
T9. Steve Hargan	6 pts.	T17. Hector Torres	1 pt.
T9. Jerry Johnson	6 pts.	T17. Gary Woods	1 pt.

APPENDIX E

SAMPLE ARTICLE

PREVIOUSLY COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL

IN APPENDIX - LEAF 141

NOT MICROFILMED.

"NHL GOVERNORS PULL PLUG ON HIGH-LIVING SUBSIDIARY"
(GLOBE & MAIL, DEC. 21, 1977)